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AN EXAMINATION OF THE ARGUMENT FROM THEOLOGY TO ETHICS

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IT is not infrequently said that the true justification of moral beliefs lies in theology. I wish here to examine precisely what is meant by this contention, and by what arguments, if any, it can be substantiated.

The view I am examining is not that the only valid reason for *doing* what is right is a theological reason (e.g. the fact that God wills it); as if we could know independently of theology what was right, but required a theological motive to make it reasonable to do it. It is rather that the very fact *that* it is right is logically dependent on certain facts of a theological nature; or, to express the matter otherwise, that from certain theological propositions it is possible validly to draw certain conclusions in the form of propositions which state what I ought to do, and that this fact is the source of the validity of these latter propositions.

This, however, is not yet a sufficiently precise account of the theory in question, since it might cover a number of different contentions, some of which I think may be reasonably maintained, while others, I think, may not. I propose to work towards a clearer formulation by considering certain arguments which have been advanced in order to deny outright the very possibility of arguing validly "from theology to ethics"; for I do believe that these arguments prove *something*, and rule out certain theories as untenable.

The chief of these arguments may be summarized as follows:[1]

1. It is only theological premises of a certain nature which can be at all plausibly held to yield ethical conclusions; and upon examina-

[1] Some of these arguments are taken from an article entitled "Ethics and Belief in God," by Dr. A. C. Ewing (*Hibbert Journal*, July 1941), but I have arranged them in my own way.

tion these theological premises are found actually to be based upon *ethical* propositions. The argument from theology to ethics is therefor circular, since it is idle to pretend that we are deducing B from A if in order to establish A we have to assume that we already independently know B. This may be elaborated in several ways. Thus:

(*a*) We cannot deduce our ethics from belief in *any* kind of God, but only from belief in a *good* God. This implies the truth of at least one moral judgment independently of theology.

(*b*) We may try to deduce what we ought to do from what God wills. But we can only discover what God wills by deciding first what is right and then arguing that it is the will of God because God is good. Otherwise the will of God is arbitrary, and not moral at all, and therefore cannot provide a foundation for ethics.

(*c*) The argument from revealed theology may be similarly criticized. We cannot, e.g. accept the Christian revelation as setting a moral standard unless we recognize previously that Christ was morally good.

2. A similar conclusion may, it is also urged, be reached by examining the moral predicates. The concepts for which these stand are, it is argued, *sui generis*, any reduction of them to terms which are other than distinctively ethical being impossible; and therefore, while it is possible to derive one ethical proposition from another ethical proposition, it is impossible validly to draw any ethical conclusions from premises none of which are themselves ethical.

3. The practical value of an argument from theology to ethics, even if valid, would also be questioned. For it would be urged—

(*a*) That we know the truth of at least *some* moral propositions more certainly than we know the truth of *any* theological ones; and

(*b*) That the mere fact that something is good makes it worth pursuing, whether there be a God or a future life or not; that this fact may be an operative motive in action; and that theological beliefs are therefore not even psychologically necessary for moral action.

The last argument (3) need not detain us long; nor do I think it is usually as seriously advanced as the other two.

3(*b*) may be admitted to be true (and even to be an important fact of which it is highly necessary and salutary that certain theological moralists should be reminded), and yet regarded as irrelevant to the present inquiry, which is a theoretical inquiry into the *grounds* for certain beliefs and is not concerned with the question of whether a knowledge of these grounds is psychologically necessary for action in accordance with the beliefs in question.

And in reply to 3(*a*) it seems sufficient to point out—

(i) That even if this statement is true of most people, it is doubtful whether it is *universally* true.

(ii) That in any case it seems more accurate to say merely that most people *have a stronger conviction* of the truth of some moral propositions than they have of any theological ones; and strength of conviction is not the same as the certainty of the truth of that which is believed.

(iii) That the argument as stated is an argument merely against theology's being the *ratio cognoscendi* of ethics (and not against its being its *ratio essendi*). Now if this is all that the argument claims to be, then, like 3(*b*), it is irrelevant to our present inquiry; whereas if it claims to be establishing something about the *ratio essendi* of ethics, then it may be pointed out that from the fact that A is less certainly known than B it does not follow that A is not the *ground of the truth of* B.

Arguments 1 and 2, however, are of a more serious nature, and may well be considered together, since their essential point is the same. They present us, in fact, with a dilemma, viz.: In any argument from theology to ethics, *either* (i) the premises are not ethical, and in that case they do not warrant ethical conclusions; *or* (ii) the premises *are* ethical, and in that case they depend for their own proof on ethical propositions of the kind which figure in the conclusion, and the argument is therefore circular; in either case the argument is invalid. This criticism of the argument from theology to ethics I shall take leave to refer to in what follows as the "argument from the Autonomy of Ethics."[1] It seems to me that it is valid against some forms of the argument from theology to ethics, but not against all.

A person who claimed to be arguing from theology to ethics might be doing any one of a number of different things.

1. He might merely be contending that while he knew the truth of *some* moral judgments independently of theology, yet there were others whose truth he could not know except on the basis of theology (e.g. his "duties to God"). This argument might proceed by denying the validity of the argument in the second branch of the dilemma; it might maintain that, while it was necessary to assume *certain* moral propositions in order to establish the theological premises, yet these are not the *same* moral propositions as those which figure in the conclusion. This contention is, I think, quite unobjectionable, but it is, after all, from our point of view a most unimportant one, since a person who maintained it could scarcely be said to be basing his ethics on theology; the most he could be said to be doing is basing

[1] I do not wish to suggest that this type of argument could be employed only by someone who believed in the autonomy of ethics, but a person who so believed would be most likely to use this argument, and I therefore take this as a convenient way of referring to it.

some of his moral beliefs on premises some of which are theological. Nor do I think that the argument from the Autonomy of Ethics is designed to repudiate such a procedure; and I imagine that even the strictest upholder of moral autonomy, provided he were also a theist, would not take exception to it, at least in principle.

2. A person who argued from theology to ethics might, however, be contending that while he understood, without any help from theology, what it was for an action to be right, etc. (i.e. he understood the meaning of the moral predicates), yet he could not know *at all* what actions were right, etc., except on a theological basis; but that on that basis he *could* know. This is a more important contention than the last, and one which is, I think, not as uncommon as might appear on first reflection. (E.g. it is not uncommon to find people who assert that all our duties are either duties to God or duties to our fellow-men, and that the latter are derived from the former; yet many who hold this would, I think, admit under examination that they knew what "being a duty" was, independently of theology.) A person holding this view could perhaps not be said in the strict sense to be basing his *ethics* on theology, yet he would at least be basing his *morals* (in the sense of his code of action) on theology.

This position can, however, be shown to be invalid thus. What its adherents must be saying is something like this: that from the fact that A possesses the theological characteristic X we can infer that it also possesses the non-theological ethical characteristic Y. But such an inference is possible only if we previously accept the premise that everything which possesses X also possesses Y; and this is an *ethical* and not a theological proposition in precisely the same way as the proposition that all disinterested acts of benevolence are morally good (even when the phrase "disinterested act of benevolence" is given a purely psychological analysis) is an ethical and not a psychological one. This criticism is simply an application of the argument from the Autonomy of Ethics.

3. An "argument from theology to ethics" might, however, be claiming to do something more important than either of the previous two theories. It might be claiming to give a content to the ethical predicates by an argument from theological premises. The previous theory (2) began by accepting, e.g. the notion of moral duty, but held that the answer to the question, "What actions are our duty?" was of the form, "All actions which possess the characteristic X," where X is some theological characteristic. The present theory holds that the very notion of being morally obliged is derived from a theological source (and similarly with other moral terms); yet it claims that it is dealing with the perfectly ordinary moral terms as they are commonly used.

We must firstly be careful to see precisely what this theory does

state. For a person who claimed to be holding it might in fact merely be stating in a slipshod way the previous theory (2). For he might be contending that theology tells him not merely *what* he should do, but also *why* he should do it; and by this he might mean simply that theology tells him not only that he should do A, but that the reason why he should do it is, e.g. that it is in accordance with the will of God, and whatever is in accordance with the will of God ought to be done. But in this case he is merely holding that in addition to telling him what particular actions he ought to do, theology tells him what in general he ought to do. He has done nothing to show that the "ought" is itself a theological notion.

But the meaning which in strictness this theory ought to bear is that the correct analysis of the ordinary moral predicates is an analysis in theological terms. And this may be confidently denied. For it seems clear that people who hold no theological beliefs both understand the notion of moral duty and believe that they have moral duties; whereas if the notion of duty were essentially a theological one, they either would not understand it, or, if they did, would deny that they had any moral duties.

4. But someone who claimed to argue from theology to ethics might be advancing a theory just as important as the last, yet quite different from it; namely, the theory that it is possible validly to argue from theological propositions to a set of propositions about human beings and their conduct, whose predicates are not identical with the ordinary *moral* concepts of "good," "bad," "right," "wrong" and "duty," yet which are *normative* just as "purely moral" propositions are. I propose to devote the rest of this discussion chiefly to examining this theory in greater detail and to inquiring to what extent it escapes the criticisms which proved fatal to other theories.

I shall first of all contend that this last-mentioned theory is a more adequate expression than those which preceded it of what most "theological moralists" in fact hold. For they at least hold that certain actions are "sinful," and others the reverse;—though perhaps not all theologians would allow that *any* human actions are the reverse of sinful. (A difficulty of a linguistic nature arises here, because there does not seem to be a satisfactory English antonym of "sinful." The terms "righteous" and "holy," which spring to mind most readily, are neither of them altogether satisfactory. But I believe I can make the points I wish to make, either by referring to the term "sinful" alone, or by referring to "sinful" and its opposite as "the terms of religious approbation and disapprobation";—though our use of this phrase must not be taken to mean that these terms are to be analysed in terms of the approval and disapproval of the person who uses them.)

Now of this term "sinful" two relevant remarks may here be made:

(*a*) It is a concept which corresponds in the theological sphere to the concepts "morally wrong" and "morally bad" in the ethical sphere.[1] And like these latter it is *normative* and *authoritative*. I.e., if an action is sinful it is presented to us, no less surely than if it is morally wrong, as *not to be done*; and it is so presented not merely with the sanction of power, but with a claim to *authority*, for no more than the term "morally wrong" can the term "sinful" be regarded as equivalent to "forbidden or disliked by X," even where X is a deity of however great power.

(*b*) It is equally clear, however, that the term "sinful" does not have the *same* meaning as either "morally wrong" or "morally bad," or indeed as any purely *moral* term whatsoever. For a person who did not believe that any theological propositions were true would not believe that any actions were sinful, whereas as we have previously said he might believe that some actions were morally wrong. It is certainly true that the word "sinful" is sometimes used simply to mean "morally *very* wrong," but I think that those who so use it would admit, if pressed, that they were using the word loosely, and that in the strict sense to say that an action is sinful is to say either something more than or something different from saying that it is morally wrong; something, moreover, which is necessarily connected with certain theological facts. It seems clear, therefore, that the analysis of "sinful" must be at least partly in theological terms.

But here a difference of opinion may arise:

A. It may be held that the correct analysis is in *solely* theological terms, and not at all in ethical ones.

B. It may be held, on the other hand, that the correct analysis is in terms some of which are theological and some of which are ethical. And this contention might take either of two forms:

(i) One might try to distinguish between a normative and a non-normative element in the analysis of the term, and hold that the normative element was ethical and the non-normative theological. Let me try to explain what I mean by an example. Let it be granted that an intemperate act may be defined as an act which is concerned with the bodily pleasures and which is wrong; and an unjust act as one which is concerned with the distribution of goods and which is wrong.[2] Then I call "being wrong" the normative element in each

[1] With which of these terms it is more nearly analogous I shall not here enquire, since to do so would involve a discussion of the whole question of the relation between the terms "morally wrong" and "morally bad," which would be out of place in this context.

[2] I do not wish to suggest that these are adequate definitions of intemperance and injustice (they are in fact obviously defective); I use them merely in order to illustrate a logical point.

definition, and "being concerned with bodily pleasures" and "being concerned with the distribution of goods" the non-normative elements; and it may be held that the normative element bears precisely the same meaning in each case, the non-normative elements being the *differentiae* which distinguish intemperate and unjust actions as species of the genus "wrong actions"; and furthermore that the normative element is a purely ethical concept, and the non-normative an empirical (or at least a non-ethical) one in each case. In a parallel way this theory holds that a sinful action is to be defined as an action which is concerned with the agent's relation to God and which is wrong (or in some similar terms), the term "wrong" bearing the same meaning as in the definitions of intemperance and injustice, and the term "being concerned with the agent's relation to God" being the non-ethical *differentia* which characterizes sinful actions as a further species of wrong actions.

I do not propose, however, to spend time discussing this theory, since it is in essentials the same as a view which I have previously mentioned and dismissed as unimportant (theory 1, pp. 5–6). I mention it here only to distinguish it from the next theory, with which it might otherwise be confused, viz.:

(ii) The view which holds that the *normativeness* of the concept of "sinful" (that in virtue of which it is analogous to "wrong," not e.g. to "unjust") is partly of a theological and partly of an ethical nature.

The two theories with which we shall be concerned are therefore those which I have numbered A and B (ii).

Before I try to discuss each more carefully, there is one preliminary criticism to be considered, a criticism which if valid would make either theory untenable. It will be said: if any proposition of the form "X is sinful" is to be binding on me in any sense in which we are interested here, it must present me with an "*ought*" (or, more accurately, an "ought not"); now the very notion of an "ought," it will be said, is simply the notion of moral obligation. Or, to put the matter otherwise, if I am not *morally* bound, I am not validly obliged at all; nor can anything *added to* my being morally obliged in any way modify the obligatoriness of that which I am obliged to do.

It can at least be shown, however, that it is not necessary to hold this view. For in the notion of moral obligation we can distinguish between the bare notion of obligation and the fuller notion of obligation of a specifically *moral* nature. Now the bare notion of obligation (or of an "ought," or an "imperative") is simply that of the prescription of something as "to be done," where there is some valid reason why it is to be done. It is important to stress this last point,

that whatever is to be done is "to be done" for some reason; there must, that is, be some *ground* of the obligation; and it is my contention that it is the nature of the kind of ground on which X is prescribed as "to be done" which determines the kind of obligatoriness (moral or otherwise) which X possesses.[1]

Now that there are different kinds of grounds on which an action may be prescribed as to be done seems to me clear. But when I thus speak of there being different grounds of obligation, I do not mean merely that different classes of things are obligatory, nor do I mean what a person who held Ross's theory of *prima facie* duties would mean if he referred to "previous acts of my own," "previous acts of other people," etc., as different grounds of moral obligation: I wish to refer to what, e.g., the grounds of all of Ross's *prima facie* duties have in common (viz. their being grounds of specifically *moral* obligation) and to contrast this with, say, being an *aesthetic* ground of obligation. For it seems to me that there is an "aesthetic ought" (e.g., "this line (in a picture) ought to curve to the right, not to the left"; "I ought to take up a respectful attitude to this work of art") as well as a "moral ought"; and that what distinguishes them is not a difference in the bare notion of obligatoriness (which is identical in both), but a difference in the kind of ground on which the obligation rests, a difference which gives rise to a different kind of obligation. Now if we can thus distinguish between aesthetic and moral obligation, maintaining that aesthetic obligation *is* obligation, yet without the necessity of reducing it to moral obligation, then we can similarly distinguish religious obligation without the necessity of reducing it to moral obligation either.[2]

Now one important type of theory (which seems to me a plausible

[1] Kant also says this. For after distinguishing his three types of Imperatives, based on different kinds of grounds, he goes on to speak of the "marked distinction" between them "in the *dissimilarity* of the obligation of the will" (*Grundlegung*, p. 41). But Kant is quite sure that even Hypothetical Imperatives *are* imperatives; and "all imperatives are expressed by the word *ought*" (p. 36). Kant does not, of course, go on to work this out in the way I have chosen to do here.

[2] I may remark here that my argument at this point does not depend on an acceptance of the view that there ever *is* such a thing as a valid aesthetic obligation. We can distinguish two questions: (*a*) Is the notion of a (non-moral) aesthetic obligation a *self-consistent* one? (*b*) Granting that it is, do such obligations ever in fact arise? Even if the answer to (*b*) be in the negative, the answer to (*a*) may still be in the affirmative. All that is required here is the admission that the notion of an obligation which rests on aesthetic grounds and is not to be analysed in moral terms is a *self-consistent* notion. If this is admitted, then it follows that the notion of obligation is not such that all obligation must necessarily be moral obligation, and that therefore the notion of a distinctively religious obligation is not a self-contradictory one. And this is all that I am concerned to maintain here.

one, though I do not wish to enter into a defence of it here) holds that the ground and basis of any obligation—that from which it somehow[1] derives its bindingness—must be some kind of *value*.[2] This might be elaborated by saying that subjective value (i.e. that value which belongs to things which are merely *valued*, without necessarily being regarded as *valuable*) gives rise to "Hypothetical" obligation, aesthetic value to aesthetic obligation, either moral value or what we may perhaps call the "human values" in general (e.g. happiness, affection) to moral obligation, and religious value to religious obligation.

If this theory is accepted, then the issue between the views which I have numbered A and B (ii) may be alternatively stated thus: that A holds that theological or religious value—that characteristic value which the religious man attributes to God and derivatively to other religious objects—is completely *sui generis*, and in particular contains no ethical elements; while B (ii) holds that it is to be analysed partly in terms which are distinctively theological and partly in terms which are ethical.

Corresponding with A and B (ii) respectively, we may distinguish two main forms of the argument from theology to a system of normative propositions about conduct,[3] which I intend to call I. The *Pure* form, and II. The *Mixed* form of the argument. To a consideration of each of these I shall now turn.

I. *The Pure form of the argument.*

The three main and inter-related characteristics of this argument are: (*a*) it employs theological but no ethical premises; (*b*) it offers an analysis of "sinful" and its opposite (the terms of religious approbation and disapprobation) in exclusively theological terms; (*c*) it regards "religious value" as completely *sui generis*, and not at all derived from ethical sources.

The following remarks do not claim to be more than a very brief attempt to construct and comment on such an argument; to examine

[1] "Somehow"—because there are several forms of the theory.

[2] Whether this theory is in general true or not, it is worth stating here, since a person who believes in distinctively religious obligation will almost certainly try to base this obligation on some value-characteristic possessed by God. And in any case, whether I should accept this theory without qualification or not, I should at least wish to maintain (in common with most moral philosophers) that value is *one* of the things which can give rise to an obligation.

[3] I use this phrase rather than "an argument from theology to *ethics*" or "to *morality*," because the predicates of the propositions I refer to are not the ordinary moral predicates, and it may be urged that the terms "ethics" and "morality" should be used only with reference to propositions expressed in the ordinary moral terms.

it in detail and to inquire into the reasons advanced for its premises would be a very lengthy labour.

1. It is obvious that a necessary premise for the deduction is the proposition that God exists. But it is equally necessary for the deduction that God should be of a certain nature. For the contention we have previously noted on p. 4 (viz. that *any* kind of God will not do; it must be a good God) is amply justified; but not necessarily, we add—and if the present form of the argument is to hold, then *necessarily not*—a *morally* good God. Still, it is a *good* God that we require, although the goodness he possesses may be no more akin to moral goodness than say aesthetic goodness is. As to what we should *call* this theological value-characteristic there is little doubt; it is *holiness*.

Now we may inquire whether there is any "argument for the existence of God" which will lead us to belief in a God of this nature. And of the arguments known to me, even admitting that all are valid, only one appears to be capable of serving our purpose here, and that is the "argument from religious experience." For consider: the Moral Argument is clearly out of court in this context, since we are not admitting any ethical premises. The Metaphysical arguments may lead us to believe in the existence of a God who is infinite, omniscient, self-existent, powerful, the first cause of all finite beings, but scarcely in a God who is *holy*. We are left with the argument from religious experience; and in fact it does appear to be the case that it is the occurrence of experiences of a distinctively religious type which have given rise to the conception of a *holy* God. It may be noted here, however, that this argument is not a *causal* one; it does not, that is to say, begin with certain experiences, considered simply as events in the history of a mind, and argue to the existence of God in order to account for their occurrence. It is rather a claim that what is called religious experience is of its nature *cognitive*, or at least has a genuinely cognitive aspect as well as an affective one; it may, indeed, include the contention that the feelings which occur in religious experience (at least in its more "genuine" forms) are to be regarded merely as consequent upon the cognition of an object of a certain kind (viz. God).

If this argument be admitted as offering valid grounds for belief in the existence of God, and if it be also admitted, as I think it must, that the Object of religious experience is cognized as *holy* (for otherwise we should not call the experience a religious one at all), then we may raise the question: Is this property of holiness, which is recognized in religious experience, of a distinctively theological nature, or is it capable of analysis in non-theological terms? And, although it would require a lengthy discussion to establish it, the answer to this question seems to me clear: it is that the property in question *is*

of a distinctively theological nature and is not capable of complete analysis in non-theological terms. But whether it is wholly and exclusively theological, or on the other hand contains some *moral* elements, is a question to which I find it peculiarly difficult to return any definite answer; considerable evidence from the testimony of those whose religious experience seems to be best authenticated might be adduced to support either view; and in any case I shall be dealing with both alternatives, the former in the present section and the latter in connection with the Mixed form of the argument.

2. Two addenda to the last-mentioned contention may here be made.

(*a*) I do not wish necessarily to exclude other "proofs of the existence of God" from *playing a part* in the establishment of the existence of a holy God. It would be perfectly consistent to maintain, e.g. that the Argument from Design establishes the existence of an intelligent deity who is the creator of the universe, and then to argue on the basis of religious experience that this *same* deity is also holy. My contention is merely that the conception of God as *holy* must derive from religious experience.

(*b*) The argument which tries to maintain that God may be known to be holy through a *revelation*, cannot in fact do this apart from the argument from religious experience. For even supposing that I previously believe in a "metaphysical" God, and that the prophet through whom the revelation comes appears with unimpeachable testimonials of his commission by such a deity, then he may indeed teach me that God is holy in the sense that he may teach me to use the *word* "holy" when I speak of God. But if holiness is the kind of property which we have referred to above, how can he teach me to *understand* that God is holy except by either directing my attention to religious experience and pointing out what is therein cognized, or making me recognize the distinctive characteristic of holiness in his own message? In either case the appeal is ultimately to religious experience.

3. Two remarks may here be made about the property of holiness:

(*a*) It is, as we have previously remarked, a *value*-characteristic. This mode of expression may, however, seem objectionable, and its objectionableness points to a difference between the way in which this value is ascribed to God and the way in which other forms of value are ascribed to other objects. The objectionableness arises, I think, because with the notion of a "value-characteristic" we normally associate the notion of "passing a value-judgment on" an object, and this suggests that we adopt towards the object the attitude of "sitting in judgment on" it and testing it by some standard which we have grasped and understood. And this, clearly, is what we can never do in the case of God; when we assert that God is holy

we are certainly not passing a value-judgment on God in this sense. It would be better, indeed, instead of speaking of passing a value-judgment on God, to speak of the *recognition of a worth* possessed by God; a worth, moreover, which, while we can recognize it *as* a worth, we can never measure or fully grasp. (It is just this conjunction of the ability to recognize God as possessing this worth or value, and the inability to measure it by any standard we can understand, which seems to be the source of religious awe.) Yet that holiness *is* a value-characteristic we must maintain and emphasize.

(*b*) Not only so, but, if the testimony of religious experience is to be accepted, then holiness must be regarded as the *highest* of all values. It need not necessarily be held that *any* object which possesses the property of holiness is more valuable than any other object which possesses any other kind of value-characteristic; but it must at least be held that if there exists a God who is holy, then in virtue of *his* holiness he possesses a very much higher degree of value than anything else whatsoever. It may be objected that God cannot be compared in this way with other things; but, e.g., all mystics are agreed that their experience of God makes them rank everything but God as trivial in comparison with him; and this does presuppose the possibility that a comparison can be made.

4. Suppose, then, that it is admitted that there is a God who possesses this attribute of holiness which is completely *sui generis* and not to be analysed in ethical terms, and that in virtue of his possession of it he is supremely good, then two questions arise: (*a*) How can this fact give rise to an "ought" for me? and (*b*) What is it that I ought in this sense to do? The former of these questions is philosophically the more important, and with it we are at the heart of the problem.

5. How does the holiness of God give rise to an "ought"? First of all let us be quite clear that it *is* the *holiness* of God which gives rise to the obligation. And this can be seen by thinking of a deity who was, say, the omniscient first cause of the world, but not holy; I think it is clear that from the existence of such a God no obligation would follow. And if in addition God is conceived of as a *person* who is *morally* good, then at most (*a*) there is introduced into the world of our relationships one more person, towards whom we may have duties in the same sense and of the same kind as we have towards our fellow-men even if there is no God; and (*b*) God's will (if we can know it) may be a *guide* to what is morally right, but the obligation does not derive from him. If, however, God is *holy*, and actions are not merely right and wrong, but sinful and the reverse of sinful, then it seems possible to maintain that the will of God is not a mere guide to what, quite independently of him, is in itself sinful; but rather that on the other hand it is the relation of the

actions to the holy God which makes them sinful or the reverse, and which is the source of the obligation to avoid the former type and to do the latter.

But this does not answer our present question, viz. *How* does this holiness, this supreme worth, of God give rise to the *obligation*? And to this question I do not see how any *ultimate* answer can be given. For if the proposition that the holiness of God gives rise to an obligation is true, then it is *necessarily* true; and equally certainly it is a *synthetic* proposition—for let God be as holy as he may, let him announce his will however clearly, add, if you will, that if I do not obey him I shall suffer eternally, yet none of this is *equivalent* to my being under an obligation to do anything. Now how such a synthetic necessary proposition can be conclusively proved I do not see. For it cannot be proved by analysis of its terms, since it is synthetic; nor by any kind of induction, since it is necessary; while an attempt to deduce it from some such proposition as that the existence of value is in general a source of obligation merely moves the problem one stage back, since this proposition, if true, is itself synthetic and necessary. One resource remains, not indeed to give an ultimate proof of, but to give plausibility to the contention in question, and that is to try to show that the derivation of religious obligation from the holiness of God proceeds on the same principles as the derivation of other forms of obligation from *their* grounds, and urge that they therefore all stand or fall together.

Consider first "aesthetic obligation." I am aware that this is an unfamiliar term, but to me it seems clear that I have a duty to act in a certain way with respect to works of art which I recognize as aesthetically valuable;[1] a duty which may be roughly indicated by saying that I ought to "respect" them (e.g. I ought to adopt a certain mental attitude towards them when I am in their presence, I ought not wilfully to destroy or deface them, etc.). And if I were asked what was the ground of this obligation, I should reply that it was simply the aesthetic value of the object; this aesthetic value which it possesses puts a certain claim on my behaviour. But this proposition also is synthetic; the possession of aesthetic value by the object is by no means identical with, nor does it contain as part of its analysis, my being under an obligation to respect it; and *how* the one gives rise to the other seems to me ultimately an unanswerable question

[1] I use the term "aesthetically valuable" rather than "beautiful," because, while "beautiful" is admittedly often used simply to mean aesthetically good, it is also often used to refer to a quality which is not identical with aesthetic value simply; a quality which, e.g. a Botticelli Madonna possesses to a markedly greater degree than El Greco's "Laocoon," though this fact does not mean that the former is aesthetically better than the latter. Neglect of this ambiguity seems to me to be a common source of confusion in discussions of aesthetic questions.

(unless we simply say, as before, that value is the kind of thing which does give rise to an obligation, which is no answer at all).

There is a similar situation in the case of moral obligation. Suppose it is admitted that the fact that I have made a promise imposes on me an obligation to fulfil that promise; still this does not explain *how* from the past fact the present obligation arises. Once again, if we are to hold that the making of a promise imposes an obligation, we have either to accept this as an ultimate synthetic necessary proposition which can be *seen* to be true, or else derive it from some more ultimate proposition which is itself synthetic and necessary. (It seems to me, incidentally, that an examination of this relation between the grounds of an obligation and the obligation itself is as important a task as any which ethics has to perform.) In the case of morality, however, this more ultimate proposition cannot be altogether parallel with the more ultimate proposition I suggested in the case of aesthetics; we cannot, i.e. say that our moral duties to X derive directly from the moral goodness of X, since this would entail holding that we have no duties to people who are not morally good, and this does not appear to be the case. Whether the source of moral obligation is still some value-fact, though the relation between them is more indirect, I shall not here inquire.

If the foregoing account is accepted, and if we are prepared to accept these synthetic necessary propositions in the spheres of aesthetics and ethics, then we can have no reason *a priori* to reject them in the theological sphere. The proposition that the existence of a holy God imposes a claim on me appears to be no different in form from, and to offer no more difficulties than, the proposition that the existence of an aesthetically valuable work of art imposes a claim on me, or the proposition that my having made a promise imposes a claim on me.

We may note here that in one way the religious obligation is more nearly allied to the aesthetic than to the moral one—in that it is grounded directly in the value of the object towards which the obligation lies; whereas in moral obligation, as I have previously remarked, it will not do to say that I have duties to good men but not to bad ones. But two important qualifications are necessary: (*a*) While the modes of derivation of aesthetic and religious obligation are similar (viz. from the value of an object to an obligation towards that object), the values in each case, however, are strikingly disparate. Holiness is immensely superior to aesthetic value; and it would at least usually be held that *moral* value approached more nearly to holiness in point of sheer value than aesthetic value did. (*b*) Whereas aesthetic claims seem to be merely claims on *some* of my actions, on *some* of my attitudes, for *some* of my time, and only on a limited aspect of my mind or personality, theological claims

would usually be held to be claims on my whole self, on all of my actions and for all of the time that I exist.

6. Suppose it is accepted that the existence of a holy God is connected necessarily though synthetically with an obligation resting on me. Can we say anything about the content of that obligation, and about how it is connected with propositions such as "This action is sinful"? It seems to me that the most plausible line of argument is as follows:

(*a*) It may plausibly be contended that when an obligation towards a certain object is derived from the value of that object itself, then the claim which that object legitimately makes on us is a claim to our attention and respect *in proportion to the degree of value which that object possesses.* If, then, there is a God and he is holy and his being holy means that he possesses goodness to an immeasurably higher degree than any other object or person, then the claim which he legitimately makes on us in virtue of that holiness is, according to the above-mentioned principle, it may be contended, a complete and all-embracing claim to that which at a lower level we are content to call our "respect," but which at this level we can more appropriately call our "devotion" or "love." In this way, it may be argued, we can establish what may be called the *basic religious obligation,* viz. the obligation to love God.

(*b*) If we add the further theological premise that all men have been created by God and have a certain divine element in them, then it may be argued that if we love our fellow-men because of this divine element in them and because of their relation to God, then in so doing we are actually expressing our love towards God. In this way it might be held that a further religious obligation (to love our fellow-men) may be established by *derivation* from the basic religious obligation to love God.

(*c*) It is usually said by theologians that our religious obligation is to do the will of God; and we may inquire how this conception of the will of God fits into the scheme we have been describing. It seems to me that the following approach is the best. To say simply that X is the will of God is not in itself equivalent to, nor does it in itself appear to entail, that I ought to do X. It may, however, be argued that I cannot be said to love God in the full sense in which I ought to love him, unless I in fact do his will; and this means that we derive the obligation to do the will of God from the basic religious obligation to love God, which in turn we have derived, as previously indicated, from the holiness of God.

We may further ask how we know what *is* the will of God. And there appear to be two possible methods of determining this:

(i) By *revelation.* It is noteworthy that most of the "higher religions" have in fact proclaimed some specific "revelation of God

to man," and have contended that one purpose of this revelation is to teach men what the will of God is.[1] Now provided that sufficient evidence is adduced to convince us that the revelation in question is a genuine one, this method of determining the content of the will of God appears to be a perfectly valid one; for in that case the prophet through whom the revelation is made is merely reporting to us a fact which he is specially qualified to know; and to this procedure (the acceptance of "expert testimony") there is no objection in principle.

(ii) By arguing that whatever is a fulfilment of the basic religious obligation to love God or (if we accept the argument in (*b*) above) the derived religious obligation to love our fellow-men, must be in accordance with the will of God.

(*d*) To what do the predicates of religious approbation and disapprobation (sinful and its opposite) apply? Conformably with all that has been said up to now, it might be held that a sinful action could be defined either as an action which is not in accordance with the will of God, or as an action done from some motive opposed to the motive of love towards God. I think, however, that a religious man would consider either of these definitions an unsatisfactory account of the nature of sinfulness, since they contain an inadequate recognition of the extent of the claims which the supremeness of the goodness of God makes. For they appear to limit these claims either to the doing of certain actions or to acting from a certain motive; and, it would be argued, these claims are really that we should be a certain kind of person; they are claims, that is, not only on certain aspects of our selves and our activities, but on our *whole* selves. To love God fully, it will be said, to give him the complete devotion which is his due, is a matter not merely of feeling certain emotions towards him or of doing certain actions, but of being a certain kind of person, a kind of person from whom such emotions and such actions will naturally flow. The predicates of religious approbation and disapprobation, therefore, will be held to apply *primarily* to *selves;* and this is why theological accounts of sin abound in metaphors such as "stain" and "defilement." In so far as a man's self or character fails to come up to the standard which is set by the conception of devotion to or love towards God, to that extent *he* may be said to be a sinful person. Derivatively, indeed, certain actions may themselves be said to be sinful, but these will be held to be those which are *motivated* by some sinful element in the agent's character. The complete derivation of a proposition of the form "Action X is sinful," therefore, will be, on this account, from the holiness of God to an obligation to become a certain kind of person,

[1] I am aware that orthodox Christianity does not hold that this is the *main* purpose of the Christian revelation.

a person whose nature is defined by reference to the conceptions of devotion to God and readiness to do his will; from this to the conception of a sinful person, and a sinful element in a person's character; and thence finally to the obligation not to do the acts prompted by the sinful elements in one's character.

This more complicated derivation has two merits: (i) It does greater justice to the all-embracing nature of the divine claims, which seems to be implied in the testimony of religious experience to the supremeness of the worth of God. (ii) It explains the consistency of the occurrence in religious literature of the notion of sin as a stain on or a defilement of the soul, and the frequent expression of the religious experience known as the "conviction of sin" by such words as "I am a sinful *man*," rather than "I have done sinful actions."

II. *The Mixed form of the Argument*

This form of the argument (*a*) accepts certain ethical premises; (*b*) holds that the conception of holiness contains certain moral elements; (*c*) holds that the analysis of the predicates of religious approbation and disapprobation is partly in ethical terms.

A great deal of what I have said in discussing the Pure form of the argument will also be relevant here, and I shall therefore deal with the present form more briefly.

1. Let it be supposed that the truth of certain moral propositions can be known and their meaning understood independently of theology. It does not matter on what precise grounds they are held to be known. These moral propositions will state, e.g., that certain actions are morally right or wrong, and these predicates will be understood to bear an exclusively *secular*, non-theological meaning; let it be supposed, e.g., that when I say that an action is right I am affirming that it possesses some property in virtue of its relation to the system of human relationships in which we stand to our fellowmen.

2. For this argument, no less than for the Pure form, we shall require the premise that there exists a God who is holy. It will not be sufficient to know that God is *morally good*; for the obligation which I owe to any moral being, *qua* moral, however good in the moral sense he may be, appears to be the same in *kind* as that which I owe to any other moral being; the argument, in that case, therefore, would merely enable us to add to the actions already recognized as morally right a further class of actions which are right in precisely the same sense—and the argument wishes to do more than that.

The Mixed form of the argument, therefore, must also maintain that God is holy; but it maintains that the recognition of God as holy contains as one of its elements the recognition of him as morally

good, though it also includes more than that, viz. the recognition that he also possesses a non-moral, distinctively *religious*, value-characteristic.

How is the existence of such a God to be established? The "moral argument" is not automatically excluded in this context, as it was in the case of the Pure form of the theory; but if the moral argument establishes the existence merely of a morally good God, it does not seem to be *sufficient*. We should therefore require either a combination of the moral argument and the argument from religious experience; or else the argument from religious experience alone, provided that it is held that one element in religious experience is a cognition of the moral worth of God.

Remark 2(*a*) (p. 13), on the Pure form of the argument, may be taken, *mutatis mutandis*, also to apply here.

3. If it be held that there is a God who possesses this property of holiness which is a complex property containing both the element of moral goodness and the element of non-moral, exclusively *religious*, goodness, then, as in the case of the Pure form, and for the same reasons, it may be argued:

(*a*) That in virtue of his holiness (though differently conceived in this case) God is supremely good.

(*b*) That this holiness of God gives rise to an obligation for us.

(*c*) That the basic religious obligation is to love or have devotion towards God, this love or devotion being understood in terms of "being a certain kind of person," and the conceptions of a sinful person, a sinful element in a person's character, and a sinful action being derived as before.

(*d*) That the expression in practical activity of this love towards God is doing the will of God.

In this case, however (the Mixed argument), the religious obligation which I owe to God is held to arise *both* from the fact that God is a moral being *and* from his possession of non-moral religious goodness; if I omit either of these, it will be said, I am left without the distinctive character which religious obligation possesses.

4. Let us now try to combine the "purely moral" conception with which we started (remark 1, p. 19) and the conception of religious duty to God at which we have more lately arrived. Let us begin with the former, and see what happens to it when we add the latter to it. The first thing which happens may be described as a "widening of our ethical perspective," i.e. an extension of the system of relationships within which our duties lie; for we now conceive of the system of human relationships with which we started as merely one element in a wider system of relationships which contains as its most important member, not our fellow-men, but God. And secondly, concurrently with this widening, even the sphere

within which our purely secular duties were found becomes, if I may so express it, "theologized." And this happens in the following way. I recognize as my primary religious obligation the obligation to love God, and this, as we have seen, involves doing the will of God. What is the content of the will of God? The Mixed form of the argument enables us to argue thus: God is morally good, and therefore among the things which he wills are those things which are morally right (though their being morally right does not depend on their being God's will). I can therefore now see those actions which I began by regarding merely as morally right, as actions by doing which I can fulfil the will of God. And this is to regard them in quite a new light; for it means that their performance is regarded not merely as the discharging of a secular duty, but as the fulfilling of the religious obligation to love God; and it carries the consequence that their non-performance is not merely morally wrong but *sinful*, since if I recognize that any action is the will of God then that in me which urges me not to do it must be a sinful element in my character.

5. It is not likely that it would be maintained, however, that our *only* religious duties are to do the actions which we can recognize independently to be morally right. To love God, or to do the will of God, seems clearly to involve doing more than this—e.g. performing acts of religious devotion, in the ordinary sense of the term. And such actions would, on the view we are considering, be held to be obligatory in precisely the same way as the actions which can be recognized as right independently of theology; in particular, they would not be regarded as less stringently binding because the obligation to do them cannot be derived from secular morality. And this is because this view regards the whole system of human and divine relationships as indivisibly *one*, and therefore all relationships within that system as involving a relation to God, and all obligations as being religious obligations. The difference between the two classes of actions is merely that if we regard the world of merely human relationships as the *whole* world, there remains a valid obligation to do the actions which belong to the one class, but no obligation to do those which belong to the other; but this, the present view maintains, is a *wrong* way in which to regard the world.

Defence of these arguments against the argument from the Autonomy of Ethics (see p. 5)

1. Each form of the argument (Pure and Mixed) yields as its conclusion a system of propositions about human beings and their conduct; these propositions, moreover, are *normative*, in that they are genuine value and obligation-propositions. They are to be

distinguished, however, from the ordinary, commonly accepted "moral judgments," in two ways:

(*a*) Their predicates are not the ordinary moral predicates (morally good, morally right, etc.) but predicates which can be understood only in (at least partly) theological terms. According to the arguments we have outlined, therefore, even if the same action is held to be, e.g., both morally wrong and sinful, yet to say that it is sinful is to say something different from, or at least something more than to say that it is morally wrong.

(*b*) The *extension* of the terms of religious approbation and disapprobation is not identical with that of the terms of *moral* approbation and disapprobation respectively. For in particular there is a class of actions (viz. those concerned with the discharge of our "religious duties" in the ordinary sense) to which neither praise nor blame is due from the purely moral point of view (i.e., if no theological considerations are taken into account in deciding whether they ought to be done or not), yet which may certainly be regarded as sinful or the reverse. And at least in the case of the Pure form of the argument (and perhaps in the Mixed also) there is likely to be a considerable revisal, or even reversal, of the approbation or disapprobation which would normally be bestowed on actions on moral grounds alone, when the transition is made to a theological point of view.

Now whether we call such a system of propositions an *ethical* (or moral) system or not seems to me very much a matter of terminology. If we restrict the term "ethical" so that it refers only to propositions whose predicates are the ordinary moral predicates, then clearly we shall *not* call this an "ethical" system. But if we use the term to cover all propositions which state a valid obligation of whatever form, and based on whatever type of ground, and all genuinely normative value-propositions, then we *shall* call it an ethical system.

2. My purpose here, however, is not to determine which is the more appropriate use of the term "ethical," but to try to show that the argument from the Autonomy of Ethics is not a valid cricitism of the theories I have recently been examining. It *would* be a valid criticism if the conclusions which these theories attempted to establish were simply the normally accepted system of moral judgments whose predicates were the ordinary moral predicates. But in fact, as I have just pointed out, this is not the form which their conclusions take.

Let us examine the two branches of the argument from the Autonomy of Ethics. The first argues that if the premises of an argument are not ethical, the conclusions cannot be ethical either. But what the Pure form of our argument sets out to show is that from certain value-propositions there may be derived certain norma-

tive propositions about conduct; and it claims (*a*) that these value-propositions do not require any *moral* intuition or the presupposition of any *moral* judgments in order to be known, but that they can be known through the recognition in religious experience of a distinctive kind of value; and (*b*) that the normative propositions which figure as its conclusions are not *moral* propositions in the ordinary sense, in that their predicates are to be analysed in theological and not in moral terms.

The second branch of the argument from the Autonomy of Ethics urges that if any of the premises are ethical and the conclusions are also ethical, the argument is circular. Now the Mixed form of our argument does admittedly employ ethical premises. But its conclusions are not simply moral judgments in the ordinary sense; they are not, therefore, themselves presupposed in the premises, and so the charge of circularity may be met. The conclusions are in fact what we might call theologico-ethical propositions, since their predicates are held to be analysable partly in moral and partly in religious terms; and for the establishment of such propositions it is entirely reasonable that both ethical and theological propositions should occur among the premises.

Conclusion: Limitations of the foregoing discussion

Apart from its sketchiness at many points, my argument has had certain definite limitations in its scope, which, since they could not be remedied except by eleborate independent discussion of the points at issue, I shall do no more than merely indicate in conclusion. It is, however, on the outcome of such further discussions that final judgment on the contentions that I have dealt with must rest.

1. The first and most important limitation is indicated in my title. My discussion has dealt solely with the arguments *from* theology. But clearly in order that either of the two chief views with which I have dealt should be completely established, the arguments *for* their theological premises would have to be examined in detail. In particular, the argument from religious experience would have to be inspected thoroughly, both as to its general validity, and as to the precise nature of the content of religious experience. And on this latter point, in particular, the issue of whether the Pure or the Mixed form of the argument is to be preferred will very largely turn. I merely remark here that an argument from religious experience need not (and I think should not) be an argument merely from *my* religious experience. I have a perfect right to take into account the experience of others, provided that they can convey the nature of that experience to me; and this means that much of the most important data for such an argument will be drawn from the writings

of those mystics (*a*) whose religious experience bears evidence of "genuineness," and (*b*) who have brought a careful and critical analysis to bear on their experience.[1]

2. If the Mixed form of the argument is held, clearly some further account must be given, if the argument is to be complete, of how the moral premises which it employs, and which it holds to be valid independently of theology, can themselves be established. This is again a subject for an independent inquiry.

3. The whole question of the synthetic necessary connection between the ground of an obligation and the obligation itself, and especially the synthetic necessary connection between *value*-propositions and obligation-propositions, requires to be dealt with much more thoroughly. That such a synthetic necessary connection exists I have little doubt; but *how* it is to be established I do not see. I content myself here with the following comment: There appear to be four possibilities with regard to this question. Either (*a*) no such connexion is possible, in which case I do not think that *any* kind of obligation, moral or otherwise, can be established; or (*b*) that such a connexion exists can simply be immediately seen to be the case, in which event I see no more difficulty in accepting a relation of this nature in the theological than in the moral sphere; or (*c*) some ultimate justification of some general proposition connecting value with obligation is (contrary to the suggestion in the body of this discussion) possible; and if such a proposition is quite general it will apply in the theological just as much as in the ethical sphere; or (*d*) it may be found that it is possible to demonstrate such a connexion, but also to prove that it holds only in the ethical and not in other spheres (e.g. by pointing out some relevant difference between these spheres). Only in the case of (*a*) or (*d*) would the arguments we have chiefly considered be invalidated.

[1] I do not mean by this to suggest that a philosopher who is using a mystic's experience in order to construct an argument from religious experience to the existence of God must necessarily accept the mystic's own interpretation of his experience as valid; but the more careful and critical the mystic's account of his experience is, the better position will the philosopher be in to grasp the nature of that experience and to assess what value it may possess for the construction of such an argument.

IS PHILOSOPHY POSSIBLE?

A Study of Logical Positivism[1]

PROFESSOR WINSTON H. F. BARNES

§ 1

THE present situation in philosophy is paradoxical. On the one hand, thinking men and women all over the world are exclaiming that, while science has made sufficient advance to satisfy all our material needs, what we most need, and must find if we are not to suffer shipwreck, is a new sense of values, a new religious awakening and a new orientation towards life, in short a new philosophy. On the other hand, many professional philosophers are coming to hold the view that philosophy has had its day, or rather that it never in any proper sense had its day, because it is not a rational enterprise but a mistake, an illusion, a farrago of nonsense, "a muddle arising out of the complexities of language." A new inquiry which goes by the name of Analysis and resembles logic more closely than any other existing discipline is at once to give the quietus to philosophy and to reign in its stead. The modern philosopher cries, with Faustus, "Sweet Analytickes! 'tis thou hast ravished me." I will not prejudice your minds at the outset by recalling where the study of analysis led the Doctor of Wurtemburg.

Those who are thus forthrightly sceptical about philosophy and group themselves under the ægis of analysis are themselves divided into a number of sects. One and all, however, are relentless in exposing the weaknesses of philosophy, zealous in proselytizing and deadly in expounding their new technique which combines scholastic subtlety with modern scientific realism. They represent in fact a modern scholasticism loosely grouped round the dogma: "We pursue logical analysis, but not philosophy," though, by a curious paradox which demands scrutiny, some of them say: "Philosophy *is* analysis."

To examine the claim of analysis to have exploded the pretensions of philosophy seems to be incumbent upon a philosopher once at least in his lifetime. In doing so it will be well to avoid supposing the question to be as simple as both sides in the controversy have sometimes made it out to be. I may add that, like a true philosopher, I am not in any fear that the question will appear simple to you by the time I have finished speaking. I have hopes however that it will be

[1] An Inaugural Lecture delivered on April 30th, 1946, under the title "Scepticism and Analysis," from the Chair of Philosophy in the Durham Division of the University of Durham.

clear. Scepticism about philosophy is no new thing, as we shall see, and there is much to ponder in Hazlitt's remark that

> metaphysical truth has fared like the milk-white hind,
> the emblem of pure faith, in Dryden, which
> Has oft been chased
> With Scythian shafts and many winged wounds
> Aimed at her heart, was often forced to fly,
> And doomed to death, though fated not to die.[1]

Metaphysics is the heart of philosophy, its most vital and sensitive organ. If the heart can resist attack, how much more the other organs? Attempts have been made in the past to destroy philosophy by anthropology, by psychology and by many other types of crude and undigested science which I forbear to mention. Analysis is not even the first attempt to destroy it by the study of language. Horne Tooke, who tried everything else, tried also to dispose of metaphysics by etymology, a procedure which a contemporary metaphysician characterized as "this farcical mummery."[2] There is, one must admit, a touch of the absurd in the idea that the study of language is going to put an end to people asking philosophical questions. Nevertheless, we are not entitled to *assume* that the undertaking is absurd without producing proof. It will not suffice to appeal, as some "defenders of the faith" have done, to the centuries of philosophizing from Plato to Whitehead, to the great European tradition, to the *philosophia perennis*, to the natural metaphysic of the human mind. The argument from tradition is of all arguments the weakest. Even great traditions have their closes. Nor would it be proper to dwell, as I am tempted, on the delights of philosophy,

> Not harsh and crabbed as dull fools suppose
> But musical as is Apollo's lute,

though it does indeed afford endless delights to those who pursue it: or to stress how the mere setting one's mind to meditate on such subjects as God, freedom and immortality is, to use Plato's expression, a "periagoge," a turning of the spirit away from the *trivia* of everyday life to more enduring realities. If philosophy is not the rational enterprise it claims to be, its tradition is hollow, its delights are illusory, and its liberating influence an escape into a realm of fantasy. If it is rational, all these other virtues will be added to it.

§ 2

Before examing the claims of analysis let us cast an eye over the causes of scepticism about philosophy. A man may distrust the scope

[1] Hazlitt: *Collected Works* (ed. Howe), Vol. II, pp. 283–4.

[2] Again Hazlitt, who regarded himself to the end of his days as primarily a metaphysician.

and orbit of philosophy because he feels poignantly the insignificance of man in the universe, a state of mind reflected in the lines by a modern poet:

> We pieced our thoughts into philosophy,
> And planned to bring the world under a rule,
> Who are but weasels fighting in a hole.

Or the scepticism may spring from incredulity when confronted with the philosophers' conclusions, as in the gentle irony of this eighteenth-century undergraduate, later to be famous as a poet:

> The Term is now begun again, & I have made such a wonderful progress in Philosophy, that I begin to be quite persuaded that black is white, & that fire will not burn, and that I ought not, either to give credit to my eyes or feeling; they tell me too, that I am nothing in the world, and that I only fancy I exist: do but come to me quickly & one lesson of thine, my dear Philosopher, will restore me to my Senses.

Or again, consider this description of philosophy by an Elizabethan poet:

> A *Science* never scientificall,
> A *Rhapsody* of questions controverted;
> In which because men know no truth at all
> To every purpose it may be converted:
> Iudge then what grounds this can to others give,
> That waved ever in it selfe doth live?

These are poets speaking. We cannot demand that they justify their scepticism before the bar of reason. Yet reasons are implicit in what each says. The modern poet implies that there are limits set to what man can know by the subordinate position he occupies in the universe. The philosopher Kant gave reasons, when he attacked metaphysics, for what the poet Yeats feels instinctively to be true. The eighteenth-century poet rejects philosophy because, tested by common sense, it is obviously false. Thomas Gray (for it is he writing as an undergraduate to Horace Walpole) would, had he lived to-day, have found a kindred spirit in Professor Moore, whose philosophy consists very largely in defending the beliefs of common sense against the attempts of other philosophers to impugn them. The Elizabethan poet does give his reasons for distrusting philosophy and very good reasons they are: it is unscientific, and philosophers themselves cannot agree about the conclusions.

Fulke Greville has always been regarded as a philosophical poet or, if you prefer it, a poetic philosopher. It forces itself upon one's attention that the moment scepticism about philosophy becomes explicit and states its reasons it becomes itself philosophy. This fact, "the paradox of scepticism," is peculiar to philosophy. Reasoned scepticism about science or theology does not involve one in holding doctrines that could themselves be properly described as scientific

or theological. This conclusion is confirmed if we turn from the poets to the thinkers.

The sceptics of the ancient world were men who denied the possibility of knowledge altogether, thus making it as impossible for a man to know that he has two hands as to know that his soul is immortal. So obviously repugnant is this scepticism to common sense that it was regarded in its day, and has ever since been regarded, not as a denial of philosophy but as itself an extreme philosophical doctrine. In the Middle Ages scholastic scepticism asserted that truths concerning the destiny of the soul, the nature of God, and the freedom of the will were revealed to faith but could not be established by reason. Clearly, however, to say to reason "Thus far, and no farther, shalt thou go" is to hold positive philosophical doctrine. In the modern world, when the empirical method of natural science had firmly established itself, the sceptic Hume implied that there could be no such thing as philosophy, because there are only two kinds of knowledge, knowledge of matter of fact and knowledge of mathematics (in which no doubt he would have included logic had he lived two centuries later and seen the unification of mathematics and logic in the work of Whitehead and Russell). His words are famous:

> If we take in our hand any volume, of divinity or school metaphysics, for instance, let us ask, *Does it contain any abstract reasoning concerning quantity or number?* No. *Does it contain any experimental reasoning concerning matter of fact and existence?* No. Commit it then to the flames; for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion.[1]

The books of divinity and school metaphysics are still with us: and Hume is accounted one of the great philosophers. So hard is it to evade the paradox of scepticism! In principle the scepticism of Hume failed because the account of the world that he gave made it consist of nothing more than the individual's sensations, supplemented by imagination; and this account makes not only philosophy impossible but also natural science and everyday knowledge.

To this talk of a "paradox of scepticism" it may be objected that, when thinkers who deny philosophy are called philosophers, the word is used merely because philosophers and sceptics alike are in relation to philosophy, the one by practising it, the other by not practising it and by further saying that it cannot be practised. It would be a very odd use of the word if this were so. Nevertheless we should have to consider it possible if any parallel could be quoted. I cannot think of any parallel. We should not call Henry Ford a historian, even if he had given reasons for his assertion that "History is Bunk." But perhaps the summary answer to this objection is "Read the books of the great sceptics: if what you read there is not philosophy, what is

[1] Hume: *An Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Section XII, Part III.

it?" Now, of course, the modern sceptics have a reply to this challenge, namely, "Analysis." They would say, I think, that the sceptics of the past, in particular Hume, whom they regard with great reverence, have been analysts, and that they have, as it were, slipped into philosophizing because they were not as careful and thorough about analysis as they ought to have been and lacked the modern logical technique. They would go further, I think, and say that all the great philosophers, except perhaps Hegel whom they despise as much as they reverence Hume, have to some extent been analysts.

Their position is not simple, but it is quite reasonable and might be put in this way: "If you pursue analysis properly you will not be discovering anything you did not know before, but you will be finding out the meaning of certain things you already know: and as a matter of fact traditional philosophers have pursued this kind of analysis, but they have made the mistake of thinking that they were making discoveries by it, and also have mixed their analysis up with attempts to answer questions to which there is no answer." Traditional philosophy then is a blend of two elements. According to which is selected for attention the analyst will say either (*a*) "Analysis is not philosophy, or (*b*) "Analysis is philosophy." If he has approached the problems through mathematics and logic, he is likely to say the former; if he holds a Chair of Philosophy, he may find it much more politic to say the latter. Both statements are right, because once we grasp what they are driving at we see that they say the same thing. Now these two statements, assuming them to be made in the same language, contradict one another and therefore cannot both be true. But they are both true. Therefore they cannot be in the same language. In fact, of course, they are not, because the word philosophy does not mean the same thing in the two statements. If we want to answer the question "Is philosophy possible?" we have got to invent two new words to do the work of the one: and say (*a*) "Speculation"—or whatever you like to call it—"is not possible"; (*b*) "Analysis is possible."

I think you will agree with me that this is a good piece of reasoning, and, as I cannot remember having seen it in any analytical philosopher I hereby make a present of it to any one who cares to use it. On second thoughts, however, I think it may well be a recollection from one of them. For

> Who that shall point as with a wand and say
> "This portion of the river of my mind
> Came from yon fountain?"

However that be, I have used this argument not merely to expound to you the philosophy of analysis, but to illustrate it. For this

argument is itself an example of a type of argument much used by the analytical philosophers.

Good as the argument is, there are two points to be considered. Firstly, everything hangs on the validity of the distinction between the two kinds of philosophy, the analytic and the speculative or non-analytic. If it turned out that these were not two different activities, the argument would fall to the ground. Secondly, granting that there is analysis which is possible, and some other philosophical activity—call it speculation—which is not, can the analytical philosopher demonstrate that speculation is not possible without using that method which he has stigmatized as speculation? If he cannot, he is still caught in the "paradox of scepticism."

§ 3

The philosophers of analysis are what William James called "tough-minded" philosophers. Where before in philosophy "all was conscience and tender heart," all is now gleaming intellect and logical acumen. They abound in logic, and yet are full of paradoxes. They profess clarity[1], but "write a language of their own that darkens knowledge." They lack natural piety in the face of the universe; they would "pluck out the heart of its mystery" and anatomize it. The theories of other philosophers are so much grist for their mill and they grind them in their analytical machinery until they are the pure bread of logic.

It would be a fascinating task to trace the influences which have gone to the development of this philosophical outlook; in particular, the sensationalism of Berkeley and Hume and the positivism of Comte and Karl Pearson. The final impetus, however, came from the growth of mathematical logic. Ever since Zeno's puzzle about Achilles and the tortoise the existence of infinitely large and infinitely small quantities had been a philosophical scandal. Matters were made much worse by the discovery of the infinitesimal calculus by Newton and Leibniz. Here were mathematicians reasoning about infinitely small quantities and getting the right answers. It was useless for Newton's contemporary, Berkeley, to say:

> Axiom. No reasoning about things whereof we have no idea. Therefore no reasoning about infinitesimals.[2]

For there obviously was reasoning about infinitesimals. The problem was solved in the nineteenth century by the mathematician, Weier-

[1] "We strive for order and clarity, reject all dim vistas and fathomless depths." *Die Wissenschaftliche Weltauffassung.* Der Wiener Kreis. (Vienna, 1929.)

[2] *Commonplace Book,* rechristened *Philosophical Commentaries,* ed. A. A. Luce, page 113, entry no. 354.

strass, who showed how the operations of the differential and integral calculus could be carried on without bringing in infinitesimals. Assertions about infinitesimals had been satisfactorily replaced by assertions about quantities of an unobjectionable kind. Suppose that this could be done for all the abstruse concepts of higher mathematics so that it could in principle all be translated into terms of simple arithmetic, involving only the whole numbers and the fundamental operations. This is the sort of thing that was being done in the philosophy of mathematics at the end of last century. At the same time logic was being developed in terms of concepts closely related to the basic arithmetical ideas. Fastening on the belief that the logical ideas were the really fundamental ones, Russell and Whitehead, in their great work *Principia Mathematica*, attempted the reduction of mathematics to logic.

Even if I were competent I could not here find time to expound the doctrines of mathematical logic. I am concerned only with their impact on the philosophy of analysis. I will give one trivial illustration of the kind of way in which a statement involving a mathematical notion can be reduced to, or analysed into, a statement involving only logical notions. Take the statement: "Not three people are to be saved." It contains the number 3, a mathematical notion. It can be analysed into the equivalent statement: "If x is to be saved, and also y is to be saved, and also z is to be saved, then x is identical with y, or x is identical with z, or y is identical with z." This is a statement in which the mathematical idea, 3, is replaced by the letters x, y, z, which are logical variables. The form of the new statement also has the advantage of showing what the original statement conceals that nothing is really said about anybody in particular.

"Metaphysics," said the American philosopher Charles Peirce, "is the ape of mathematics." This principle of mathematical logic was very soon transplanted into philosophy. It can best be described in non-technical language as the principle of "replacing dubious entities by indubitable ones." It calls for a little explanation. "The government" is a dubious entity, compared with the indubitable entities Mr. Attlee and Mr. Bevin; a nest-building instinct is a dubious entity compared with the actual building of nests by birds: in a sense, it may be said, a table is a dubious entity compared with the actual brown patch you see and the hardness you feel.

All the philosophers of analysis make use of this principle in one form or another. We can divide them into three main sects, in roughly chronological order, except that the earlier ones persist alongside the later ones. I propose to consider them in the chronological order; and I shall be surprised if it does not appear as we pass from one stage to another that, while we seem to be moving

farther away from traditional philosophy, we are in reality only making a wide circle in order to return to it enlarged and refreshed by our wanderings.

§ 4

First, the Cambridge analysts, Russell himself, Moore, Broad, Stebbing, did not reject speculative philosophy outright. They had their doubts about it and they left it alone, preferring analysis. Their position might be summarized thus: "Metaphysics, as traditionally pursued, has been the systematic study of the ultimate nature of reality and its method has been deduction. As so envisaged the business of metaphysics is to 'justify' our common sense beliefs, i.e. to find reasons for our belief in a material world, in other people, etc.; or, if the reasons are not forthcoming, to substitute for these beliefs other beliefs for which reasons can be provided and to provide the reasons.[1] But metaphysics in this sense is a highly dubious undertaking. For we *know* by common sense or science that there is a material world and that there are other people, and that the world has existed for a great many years past, and this knowledge requires no further justification. On the other hand, neither common sense nor science tells us that there is a God or that we shall live again after we die, but it is, to say the least, exceedingly doubtful whether philosophy can tell us. What philosophy can do and had much better do is to tell us *what exactly we mean* when we say that there is a material world and that other people exist. This it can do by analysing the propositions in which these pieces of knowledge are expressed."

Let us glance first at the negative contention. It consists in railing off a certain area of fact from the philosopher on the ground that common sense has full rights of ownership. I will say nothing of the difficulties about determining which propositions are guaranteed by common sense and which are not, except to mention that Professor Moore's method is to ask himself whether he knows the proposition in question and, if he finds himself sure that he does, to accept it as stamped with the hall-mark of common sense: a habit we all have but not one regarded as specially philosophical. The first desideratum, it would seem, is to provide a rational criterion for determining whether a proposition is sterling common sense or "base speculation." Until this is done the negative contention of analysis is bottomed on a mere *ipse dixit* of the philosopher and has no more claim to be rationally debated than the poet Gray's laughter at philosophical parodoxes. This need was felt and supplied, as we shall see, by the successors of the Cambridge analysts.

[1] "Metaphysics is the finding of bad reasons for what we believe upon instinct." F. H. Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, p. xiv.

Let us turn now to the positive contention, that the proper business of philosophy is not to investigate the truth or falsity of propositions but to analyse propositions already known to be true. The ideal method here would be to illustrate the different way in which a speculative and an analytical philosopher would deal with a particular philosophical problem. As this would take far too long I forego it and content myself reluctantly with a brief and abstract statement of the point at issue. Let the question be our knowledge of the material world, and let it be agreed by both philosophers that, if I am indeed now seeing my hand, there is no doubt that my hand exists. The traditional philosopher might raise doubts about the apparently indubitable statement "I am now seeing my hand," and he might conclude by asserting that it was false and that the truth was that "I see certain 'handy' sensations and believe that there is a material object in some relation to them." The analytical philosopher, accepting the truth of the assertion "I am now seeing my hand" as guaranteed by common sense, might nevertheless analyse this proposition into the proposition "I directly see certain 'handy' sensations and believe that there is a material core in some relation to them."

At this point, I think, one is much more likely to exclaim "Tweedledum and Tweedledee" than to express surprise at the revolutionary character of the analytical method in philosophy. There are two comments I want to make: Firstly, the reasoning of the traditional philosopher is not deductive, like the reasoning in mathematics, nor inductive, like the reasoning in the natural sciences: it is not deductive, because it does not by asserting its premiss come to assert a conclusion, but it asserts its conclusion by denying its apparent premiss: it is not inductive, because it makes no appeal to observation or experiment. How tempting then to say that it is not reasoning at all but is analysis of the language we use and does not lead to any new knowledge! Secondly, the analysis of the analytical philosopher, if regarded as the analysis of the proposition, is a fake. As actually performed the analysis proceeds not by examining the proposition but by examining the situation to which the proposition refers and then framing another proposition which more exactly describes the situation. If you ask someone who has made a statement "What do you really mean by that?" you are not asking him for something you imagine his words mysteriously to contain, as water contains hydrogen and oxygen, nor for a description of the mental confusion under which you suspect him to be labouring: what you want him to do is to look at the facts more carefully and make another attempt at describing them better. This is an important point and I can put the matter in another way by pointing out that there is a fatal ambiguity in the expression "finding out

what a proposition means." There is (*a*) finding out what *x meant* by the proposition *p* (where *x* may be someone else or myself at some previous moment): and (*b*) finding out what I mean by the proposition *p*. The former is a historical investigation, and is properly described as finding out the meaning. The latter is a philosophical investigation, and, as we shall see, is really finding out the facts. The failure in practice to separate these two things, which follows from the failure to distinguish them in theory, is what has made so many philosophers bad historians of philosophy.

If we return now to our two philosophers it is difficult not to feel that they are of the same mind and hold the same conclusion. Yet they differ in holding, one, that ordinary language is inconsistent with this conclusion, the other, that it is not only consistent but that that is what it says. I am strongly tempted to agree with both: and, since they contradict one another, there must be something wrong somewhere. Without going into detail I will suggest the solution. In philosophizing about this or any other problem we become aware of elements in a typical situation which common sense is not aware of, and for which consequently the language of common sense makes no provision. We are led thereby either to invent new words or to use existing words in new senses. If more than one analysis is under discussion still more words will be needed. However adequate from the point of view of ordinary usage an expression may be, it is vague relative to the different philosophical analyses which may be given of the situation to which it refers. It is quite plausible to maintain, therefore, that it is consistent with any one of these analyses, that is, of course, with the propositions in which these analyses are expressed. At the same time it may suggest one of the analyses rather than the others; not in the sense that we could have derived this analysis from studying the expression, but in the sense that, when confronted with the different analyses, we feel that the ordinary expression would be less strained if we decided to go on using it to cover the facts which that analysis claims to reveal than if we decided to use it for any of the other analyses. For example, another analysis of what is happening when I am seeing my hand is that I am not indeed seeing all my hand, and not indeed seeing all of the surface of my hand, but that I *am* actually seeing part of the surface. It is plausible to suppose that the expression "I am now seeing my hand" suggests this analysis more than the analysis that I am having sensations which are not actually part of my hand. The traditional philosopher, therefore, who rejects the assertion "I am now seeing my hand" is really rejecting it because it *suggests* misleading analyses, inconsistent with the analysis he accepts. The analytical philosopher, in accepting it, does so because it *asserts* nothing inconsistent with the analysis he accepts.

We may conclude our examination of the Cambridge analysts by noting that the analysis they practise is not the analysis they preach: and their practice is better than their preaching, since they practice real, not linguistic, analysis, analysis of fact, not of language. We may give provisional assent to the doctrine that so regarded analysis is philosophy, if not the whole of philosophy. But whereas the traditional philosophers pursued it, assuming without thinking that they were doing real and not linguistic analysis; and the Cambridge analysts pursued it thinking that they were pursuing linguistic and not real analysis; we must pursue it recognizing explicitly that it is real analysis involving as its consequence a linguistic refashioning of our ordinary language to express the new elements revealed, which renders it easily mistaken for linguistic analysis. Linguistic analysis does exist, as for example, when I say "'This is a sashmaray" means "This is a French lugger-rigged coasting vessel,"' but it involves merely equating expressions as they are used in ordinary language. It is the business of makers of dictionaries, not makers of philosophies. Finally, these analysts do not overcome the "paradox of scepticism," for they do not give reasons for thinking speculative philosophy to be impossible, they merely shy away from it. This cannot be said of the next group of philosophers we have to consider, who in all respects deserve the name which they have taken unto themselves, the Logical Positivists.

§ 5

The older positivists of the nineteenth century, John Stuart Mill, Mach, Karl Pearson, were averse to metaphysics, and were interested chiefly in formulating the necessary conditions to which the universe must conform if natural science is to be possible. They ended up by maintaining that the universe consists entirely of sensations, a position which is "arrant metaphysics." The logical positivists, Carnap, Schlick and Neurath of Vienna, with followers in this country and the United States, approached the matter from the point of view of language, and asked the question: To what conditions must an assertion conform in order that it should make sense? They first distinguished between the propositions of mathematics and logic that can be true no matter what is the case, such as "$2 + 2 = 4$" and "Everything is what it is and not another thing," which they tended to regard as tautologies, though highly valuable and instructive ones, and propositions which are true or false according to the actual state of affairs. Concerning these latter propositions, which they called, and we may call, empirical, they formulated the now famous Principle of Verifiability, which may be stated as follows: "The meaning of any assertion consists in the observations that would verify it. If it could not be verified or falsified by any observa-

tions, it is nonsense." This is the translation into logic of the metaphysical principle that nothing exists except the data of sense. Whereas the traditional positivist would conclude that "I am seeing my hand" cannot be true since there are no such things as physical objects and a hand is a physical object, and the truth lies in the fact that I am having sensations of a "handy" character: the logical positivist would say that "I am seeing my hand" is perfectly true but needs to be analysed entirely into assertions about my actual and possible sensations. It begins surely to be clear that to every traditional theory about our knowledge of the external world there corresponds an analytical version. This is some confirmation of my contention that they are really saying the same thing. The hope that analysis is going to put an end to "the rhapsody of questions controverted" seems slight indeed! It is easy to see now why it cannot. The principle of analysis is that of replacing dubious entities by indubitable ones. Before we can apply this principle we must know what are the indubitable entities. By appealing to common sense, and following common sense, the Cambridge analysts accepted certain propositions as true and thereby committed themselves to accepting certain kinds of entities as indubitable, e.g. material things and other people's minds. We saw that common sense is an inadequate criterion. The significance of the principle of verifiability is that it lays down that the only indubitable entities are the data of the senses. On this view the Government is a dubious entity relative to Mr. Bevin, but Mr. Bevin himself is a dubious entity relative to the really indubitable entities, viz., what we actually see and hear of Mr. Bevin. The principle, therefore, seems to give us quite precise instructions on how to analyse. At the same time it holds out the fascinating prospect of enabling us to decide in quite a simple way whether any assertion we hear or read is sense or nonsense. I am afraid, however, that it is in no better case in this respect than the Cambridge analysis.

Let us see how it works. The assertion "There is a God" is rejected as nonsense, since no one supposes that it can be verified or falsified by any observations that could be made. The assertion "There is a desk in the next room" is accepted as sense because it can be analysed into assertions about observations that could be made to determine its truth or falsity; e.g. if I were to go into the next room, I should see a shiny brown expanse, and should feel sensations in my fingertips if I were to stretch out my hand. If we think we mean more than this, we are like the small boy who thinks that his £5 is somewhere in the stronghold of the bank, when in reality all that is meant by the statement that he has £5 in the bank is that, if he went into the bank he would see certain entries in ledgers and if he were to write a cheque for £5 it would be cashed. For the logical positivists the universe, like the banking system, exists on credit. We shall find,

I think, that certain statements we normally accept as true cannot be cashed on this theory.

Equivocation sets in with the account to be given of an assertion such as "There is some one in the next room." The logical positivist is compelled to say: "When I say there is some one in the next room, I mean there is a human body in the next room: and when I say there is a human body I mean that there are certain shapes to be seen, noises to be heard, and sensations to be felt by stretching out my hand." I am irresistibly reminded of that famous divine, Mr. Thwackum, in *Tom Jones:* "When I mention religion, I mean the Christian religion; and not only the Christian religion, but the Protestant religion; and not only the Protestant religion, but the Church of England." The answer to this kind of talk is: "My good sir, that may be all you mean by it but it is not all that I and other people mean by it." The answer of the logical positivist to this objection would be: "In so far as you *think* you mean more than this, you resemble the man who says 'There is a God,' and you talk nonsense." Now it is to me a highly significant fact that a man who begins by saying that talk about God is nonsense should end up by saying that talk about other people is nonsense. It is confirmation from a most unexpected quarter of the not obvious but profoundly true fact that I no more see the grief that gnaws another man's heart than I see the eternal blessedness of the Almighty. It might be said: "No, but you do observe the tears, the look, the drooping shoulders, which evidence his grief." So be it. The question then is whether anything I observe is evidence for or against the existence of God: the claim that to assert the existence of God is meaningless has been given up. Let us make the smallest possible claim and say that there are certain feelings men have which incline them to belief in God. I do not see how anyone can deny this. Then these feelings stand in the same sort of evidential relation to the existence of God as the tears, the look, the drooping shoulders do to the existence of the man's grief. I do not say they are equally good evidence: I only say that they are evidence. The positivest may say: "What you mean by grief *is* the look, the tears, the drooping shoulders: and, if you really have these feelings you speak of, what you mean by God is simply these feelings. I don't have these feelings, so that it is nonsense for me to say that there is a God."

It is abundantly clear from all this that not even by combining the principle of analysis with the principle of verifiability can you scotch metaphysical statements such as "There is a God." The argument I have stated summarily really represents a change which took place in the mind of Carnap, the leading logical positivist, over twenty years. For the essence of the Principle of Tolerance, which Carnap has recently introduced, is that questions such as "Does God exist?" are not meaningless, but neither are they

questions of fact: they are questions as to the choice of language. We often say that Christian and atheist do not speak the same language: Carnap's principle of tolerance makes the statement literally true: for it amounts almost to saying that the answer to the question "Does God exist?" is "Yes, if you have the word 'God' in your language: no, if you do not."[1] I should not be in the least surprised if Carnap were to come out very shortly with a principle of preference, to the effect that some languages are to be preferred to others.

Let us return for a moment to the principle of verifiability as applied by the early logical positivists. It not only makes nonsense of metaphysical statements such as "There is a God": it makes nonsense equally of moral judgments such as "It is wrong to steal" and aesthetic judgments such as "Hamlet is a better play than Maria Marten in the Red Barn." Truly, their little finger is thicker than Hume's loin! For this is havoc indeed. Like Mr. Jourdain, who was surprised to find that he had been talking prose all his life, we are pardonably surprised to find that we have been talking nonsense.

The logical positivist mitigates the paradox by distinguishing between two uses of language, the scientific by which we talk sense and the emotive by which we talk nonsense. The nonsense is not useless. It serves to express our feelings and to change other people's feelings. On this view, an argument about morals or religion or literary merit is not a rational proceeding whereby A endeavours to change B's mind and vice versa: it is a homiletic proceeding whereby A endeavours to change B's heart and vice versa. I am far from believing that it is not this latter: but I do not admit that this excludes it being also the former. The disjunction "either scientific or emotive" springs from the wide-spread modern heresy that "the scientific is the rational and the rational is the scientific," which has produced a semi-paralysis in the sphere of conduct and an unprecedented timidity in the sphere of speculation.[2]

[1] Russell points this out in an article on Logical Positivism in the first number of a journal *Polemic*, page 11, and adds: "I agree that many questions have turned out to be linguistic although they were not formerly so regarded, but I think this is not so often true as many logical positivists suppose."

[2] The view is not new. "You masters of logic ought to know (logic is nothing more than a knowledge of *words*, as the Greek etymon implies) that all words are no more to be taken in a literal sense at all times than a promise given to a tailor. When I expressed an apprehension that you were mortally offended, I meant no more than by the application of a certain formula of efficacious words, which had *done* in similar cases before, to rouse a sense of decency in you, and a remembrance of what was due to me! You masters of logic should advert to this phenomenon in human speech, before you arraign the usage of us dramatic geniuses." Charles Lamb, in a letter to Thomas Manning, of February, 1801. *Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ed. E. V. Lucas, 1935, Vol. I, page 249.

It is the principle of verifiability that is used to distinguish sense from nonsense. This gives rise to the following paradox. The principle itself is not, like the propositions in mathematics and logic, a tautology. It must therefore be an empirical proposition, and it will only be sense if it is itself verifiable. Yet is is clearly not verifiable. If it is not verifiable then the logical positivists are in the self-contradictory position of maintaining a principle which condemns itself as nonsense. I, in maintaining that the principle is false, thereby allow it to be sense, not nonsense, and commit myself to the view that there is at least one proposition which is not verifiable,[1] and yet is not nonsense.

I am grateful for this logical argument against the principle of verifiability, but even had it not been forthcoming I would have rested my case against it on the ground that it asks me to believe that Plato's *Republic*, St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*, St. Thomas's *Summa contra Gentiles* and Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* are works compounded out of statements having no meaning, and not the reasoned wholes they set up to be. It is true that logical positivists try to mitigate the paradox, some by maintaining that sense keeps breaking in amongst the nonsense, others by maintaining that, like poetry—which, I need hardly say, is nonsense—these works are valuable as literature. These are desperate expedients. If philosophy is dead, to call it literature is simply to insult the corpse.

I confess that I was for a long time puzzled how to explain to myself why this characterization of so much of human endeavour as nonsense was feeble and misguided. Once perceived, however, the explanation is quite simple. Sense and nonsense constitute an opposition which, like the opposition, sanity and insanity, fall under the more generic opposition, rational and irrational. If a man is mad, you expect him to reveal a breakdown of reason. That was why Hamlet puzzled the court at Elsinore and continues to puzzle the critics. "If this is madness, there is method in it." If you read philosophy, believing it to be nonsense, you will be driven to say "If this is nonsense, there is method in it." If one studies the development of Greek philosophy, how the Socratic questioning unfolds itself in the idealism of Plato and is elaborated in the architectonic of the Aristotelian treatises: if one follows out the interpretation of the fundamental Christian ideas in Origen, Tertullian, Athanasius and St. Augustine: and if, finally, one sees how St. Thomas, in his

[1] It is important to remember that there is a wide and a narrow use of the term "verifiable." In the wide sense, in which it means "capable of being supported or weakened by evidence," the principle of verifiability is true and is itself verifiable: in the narrow sense which the logical positivists give to it, in which it means "having its whole meaning in data of the senses," it is not, and the paradox arises.

Summa Contra Gentiles, weaves into one complex but ordered structure the products of both movements: the impression throughout is not of the breakdown of reason but of its absolute and unquestioned sovereignty.

I would have been content to rest the case for philosophy here, secure in the knowledge that the attempt of the logical positivists to condemn philosophical propositions is unsuccessful and ends up in contradiction, and that the great philosophical masterpieces proclaim aloud their rationality when confronted with the positivist challenge. Unfortunately, there is a third group of analysts whose doctrine offers a way out of these difficulties.

§ 6

Logical analysis, in these last philosophers, bears a considerable resemblance to psycho-analysis. Psycho-analysis showed that in a great deal of madness, there *is* a great deal of method: that in many diseased states of mind, the mind does not so much break down as go off on a wrong track. The third group of analysts have been called Therapeutic Positivists.[1] For them philosophy is a disease, induced by linguistic cramp. The symptoms are being puzzled when all is clear, and asking for more ultimate explanations than any you get. The cure is: Analysis, performed under the guidance of a skilled analyst. Here then is a form of analysis which has good hopes of avoiding the paradox of scepticism. Its adherents can say: "I do not give you a criterion, a theory of what is sense and what is nonsense. I formulate no theories. But bring me a metaphysician and I will cure him." In practice, the therapeutic positivists depart considerably from this ideal. As well as treating patients for Part II of the Moral Sciences Tripos at Cambridge, they write articles expounding their methods of treatment, in the course of which they resort to what looks suspiciously like argument. It is also a curious fact that their old patients are more intent on becoming therapists themselves than on simply enjoying life free from the perplexities of philosophy.

How could one test out the truth of this claim? It might seem that the most convincing test would be for a speculative philosopher, known to be suffering from tertiary metaphysics, to submit himself for treatment. However, I do not think that, even if this were done and the patient emerged "cured," i.e. having ceased to worry about philosophical problems, this would be other than very slight evidence in favour of the view. I say this because I see no reason why techniques should not be devised for curing people of a great many

[1] By Mr. B. A. Farrell in his articles "An Appraisal of Therapeutic Positivism" in Mind, Vol. LV (1946), pp. 25–48 and 133–150.

activities which are highly desirable and highly rational. The mere fact that one can be cured of an activity, i.e. can be changed from ardently pursuing that activity into lacking all interest in it, cannot throw any light upon the question whether the activity is a rational one.

It is unwise, therefore, of these analysts to stress too much the therapeutic character of their analysis. In fact their so-called therapy is quite different from that of the psycho-analyst. For not only is the *end* of the treatment the cure of a disease of reason, but the *method* of treatment consists in an appeal to the reason. If the patient is not as clever at logic as the analyst—or perhaps if he is cleverer—there is grave danger of his not being cured. The logico-therapist can quite legitimately turn round on his patient and say: "The reason you aren't cured is that you are too stupid." A medical man who said this would be struck off the register. If metaphysics were really a disease the simple cure was long ago discovered by Charles Lamb when he wrote to his friend Manning: "Nothing puzzles me more than time and space, and yet nothing puzzles me less, for I never think about them."[1]

I am afraid that this notion of analysis as a branch of medicine, though fascinating, is a red herring. If the therapeutic positivists prefer to argue their views with individuals one at a time rather than to a large audience, it is not because they are treating these people, it is because they are engaging in close reasoning and the only way to do this effectively, as every Oxford tutor knows, is to take your victims one at a time. Naturally, the therapeutic positivists do not willingly admit that they are engaged in reasoning about philosophy. They are haunted by the paradox of scepticism. Wittgenstein, who inspired logical positivism, never fell into its error of trying to formulate a general criterion for distinguishing sense from nonsense. He was content to say at the end of his *Tractatus Logico-philosophicus*:

> My propositions are elucidatory in this way: he who understands me finally recognizes them as senseless, when he has climbed out through them, on them, over them. (He must so to speak throw away the ladder, after he has climbed up on it.) He must surmount these propositions; then he sees the world rightly.
> Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.

The logical positivists disliked the obscurantist tone of this peroration, and they set to work, in defiance, to justify the saying of what Wittgenstein had said could not be said. They were led in the process to make many valuable contributions to the theory of language, but, as we have seen, they were not able to prove that any proposition in philosophy is nonsense. The therapeutic positivists

[1] *Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb*, ed. E. V. Lucas, Vol. II, p. 90.

have given up trying to show that philosophy is impossible, and have concentrated more and more on unravelling the complexities of particular philosophical problems with a view to showing that there is no answer to them. In the process they have come to acknowledge that the philosophers' statements are not nonsense. These statements, though verbal, have a real point. They illuminate the ultimate structure of facts.[1] On the other hand, philosophers who contradict one another *both* illuminate the structure of facts, so that, though philosophical disputes are well worth studying, there is no simple answer to the question at issue.

To illustrate their technique I will borrow an analogy from a recent writer who has gone carefully into their arguments.[2] Suppose a game in which there is a rule that one may stop the ball with the hand and a rule that one may not hold the ball in the hand. Then a question might be raised: Is catching allowed? A might argue: It is allowed because it is stopping the ball. B might argue: It is not allowed because it is holding the ball. The contentions of A and B are not arbitrary: both can produce resemblances on which to base their case. For catching in some respects resembles stopping the ball and in some respects resembles holding the ball. Yet the very fact that there are resemblances on either side makes it arbitrary to plump definitely for one or the other.

Apply this to the philosopher. The philosopher who says that we do not know that material things exist is making us aware, by recommending a new linguistic expression, of the resemblances between knowing I am seeing my hand and being almost certain that I can see a ship on the horizon. The philosopher who says that we do know that material things exist is not merely repeating what common sense says but is making us aware, by recommending a return to the ordinary linguistic expression, of the resemblances between knowing I am seeing my hand and knowing $2+2=4$, which resemblances are not present to the ordinary user of the language.

The conclusion of the therapeutic positivist is that, once these dual sets of resemblance are fully grasped and the see-saw in favour of using first one language and then the other has expended itself, the desire to ask the question "Do I really know that material things exist?" will have disappeared. What the analysis has done is to provide a more detailed description of that which is described as knowing my hand exists. Philosophical questions are really disguised demands for descriptions of this kind.

I have no wish to deny that an analysis of this kind may take place, and may yield this result. I must add, however, that it is an

[1] See an article entitled "Philosophical Perplexity," by John Wisdom *Aristotelian Society Proceedings*, 1936–7, p. 73.

[2] B. A. Farrell, op. cit.

analysis which reveals new elements in the object of the analysis, and so is real and not verbal analysis; and this kind of analysis has always been regarded as a part of philosophy. It is true that the question "Do I really know that my hand exists?" on this view admits of no answer Yes or No; and must be replaced by the question "What exactly *is* knowing that my hand exists?" Philosophy, as an ultimate inquiry, has a particular propensity to reformulate its questions, before it can answer them. But this reformulation of its questions is not peculiar to philosophy. People used to ask "How can men exist hanging upside down at the Antipodes?" Are you going to say that physics and astronomy have not answered this question merely because it had to be reformulated to be answered properly? Suppose that, in answer to the question "How do I know that God exists?" I received a wholly convincing proof that God did not exist and at the same time an equally satisfactory account of why many people came to think that He did, can I claim that my question has not been answered? I should certainly no longer be inclined to ask the question: and I should not merely be "cured" of asking it, I should have good reasons for not asking it. It is true, of course, that I asked a theological question and received not the theological answer I expected but a philosophical answer. The reason is that theology, like the sciences, natural and social, like history, like all inquiries except philosophy, is a closed inquiry. It assumes that God exists in order to pursue its inquiries: it is no part of its business to ask whether God exists or not.[1] Just as the zoologist assumes that animals exist: as the economist assumes that men acting from economic motives exist; and as the mathematician assumes that numbers exist. Philosophy is the only open inquiry, because it makes no assumptions before commencing its inquiries (though of course it makes assumptions, or hypotheses if you like, in the course of arriving at its conclusions), and because there can only be one inquiry which makes no assumptions. Since it makes no assumptions it cannot be defined by reference to a particular subject matter or a particular method. It can only be defined as "the inquiry which makes no assumptions." For all these reasons, philosophy is not committed to defending any traditional set of questions. Is philosophy nonsense? is itself a philosophical question: and the answer, whether Yes or No, is philosophy provided it gives

[1] It is sometimes urged by the critics of the Neo-scholastics that Scholasticism is not entitled to be called philosophy, since it accepts the existence of God on the authority of revelation. The Scholastic answer, if I understand it rightly, is that one of the planks in its philosophy is that revelation is one avenue to knowledge. The defence is complete. To believe what is revealed is natural disposition: to believe that what is revealed merits belief is philosophy. Whether the natural disposition is right, or the philosophy good, is another matter.

its reasons. For the same reasons it has no unchangeable subject matter. When Aristotle, at the beginning of the twelfth book of his metaphysics, says "The inquiry is about substance," he is not telling us what metaphysics is, he is beginning to tell us what *his* metaphysics is. When he ends the book by saying "The inquiry is about God," he has completed in outline the sketch of his metaphysics. For the same reasons the inquiries which Descartes, Spinoza and Kant pursued about the method of philosophy are themselves, quite strictly, philosophical inquiries. For the same reasons, analysis is philosophy because it gives reasons for wishing to reject certain questions as nonsense and to replace them by different questions. There is no way out of the paradox of scepticism. In supposedly asking the question: Is philosophy dead and should King analysis reign in his stead? I have really been asking: Is the philosophy of analysis true? I have criticized its methods and presuppositions. This has in turn involved me in rejecting a good many of the philosophical conclusions of the analytical philosophers. It would be equally true to say that I rejected their method because I had in my mind the right method or that I found what was the right method by rejecting their method. It would be equally true also to say that I rejected their method because I found that it led to wrong conclusions, or that I rejected their conclusions because I found that their method was wrong. All this is true because I set out with no preconceived notions of method or conclusions, except the suspicion that it was not so easy as supposed to put an end to philosophy.

Still, if analysis is a good philosophy, some of the most important questions of philosophy, such as Does God exist? and Is the soul immortal? can be answered only by the process of reformulating them which takes away a lot of their interest for us. If this were the truth, philosophy would still be a rational and a necessary inquiry, and I have no doubt that you would find me still pursuing it. Since, however, I regard the methods preached and practised by the analytical philosophers as unsound, and have presented arguments for the opinion, I have no reason for thinking that these questions and similar ones cannot be answered in more or less the form in which they are asked. On the other hand I cannot assume that all those questions called philosophical *can* be answered without reformulation. I can, as a philosopher, but try to answer them in a spirit of open-mindedness and truth-seeking.

§ 7

The philosophers of analysis have rendered great service to philosophy, in uncovering problems of logic and language which had long been only half-recognized by philosophers. Any future philosopher

will neglect them at his peril. Nevertheless, I believe we can now see that their tenets are properly to be regarded not as sovereign principles destructive of philosophy but as precepts of limited jurisdiction within philosophy. You will not have failed to notice that many of my arguments have been such as would satisfy the analytical philosopher. When asked to say whether analysis was philosophy or not I replied by refusing to say Yes or No, and instead distinguished between analytical and speculative philosophy, a thoroughly analytical procedure. Valuable though the distinction was at that stage of the argument, I have no hesitation now in saying what would have been misleading had I said it then, viz. that analysis as understood by the analysts is not one kind of philosophy, the other kind being speculation, it is simply a defective version of what philosophy, properly considered, is. Analysis, as described by the analysts, is bad philosophy. Philosophy, properly understood, is best described as philosophical or speculative analysis.

I can best give an account of philosophical analysis by referring in turn to five principles we have found in the analytical philosophers, which, interpreted *à outrance* are fallacies, but moderated are of value.

(1) The first may be called the linguistic fallacy. It consists in supposing that analysis is verbal. Philosophical analysis is real analysis. I do not deny that some philosophical disputes may be based on verbal confusions. But the pursuit of real analysis will in time drive us to this conclusion, where it is so; whereas the pursuit of linguistic analysis is likely to blind us to any real differences which do exist. Moderated, the principle is: "Do not suppose that there are always real differences corresponding to verbal differences."

(2) The second fallacy may be called the empirical fallacy. It consists in supposing that all analysis must be in terms of the data of sense because nothing else exists. On the contrary, the analysis of such a proposition as "He returned the book" would be primarily in terms of intention and will, neither of which are directly observed through the senses. There are actual existences such as other minds and their operations, and structural relations within our sensory experience, which are no less real than the data of the senses. Moderated, the principle is: "Pursue analysis as far as possible in terms of the data of sense before bringing in other entities."

(3) The third fallacy may be called the mathematico-scientific fallacy. It consists in supposing that the only methods of discovering anything new about the universe are deduction, as employed in mathematics, or observation and/or experiment, followed by induction, as employed in science. It is this belief that lies at the back of the linguistic fallacy also, and makes it easy to conclude that philosophy must be concerned with language. Philosophy is neither

deduction like mathematics and logic, nor induction from observations like the natural and the social sciences. It resembles the former in not needing to make special observations or experiments, the latter in observing more carefully phenomena within the reach of every one with a view to extracting from them the most general features of experience. This is the business of philosophical analysis. Moderated, the principle becomes: "Be slow to believe, and zealous to test, generalizations based on philosophical analysis."

(4) The fourth fallacy may be called the fallacy of "sinning against the light." When we attempt to analyse the true nature of anything or any activity, which admits of being better or worse, we can describe it as it is at its best even though we never experience it at its best. By considering man as he is, we can form some idea of what he would be at his best, if all that he had it in him to be were realized. In considering such questions as "What things are good?" or "What do we mean by 'good'?"; "What actions are our duty?" or 'What do we mean by 'duty'?", we are not condemned to rest content with our thoughts as we find them the moment we take up the investigation. Our philosophical thought is a prolongation of our moral thought. This is why the accusation that the moral philosophers arguments are really homilies to make us better has some truth in it. This is why also they are not merely homiletic but also revelatory. The opposition between the scientific and the emotive use of language breaks down when we come to analyse the purposive activities of human beings. Moderated, the principle becomes: "Form your ideal conception only after the most thorough examination of the actual instances."

(5) The fifth fallacy may be called the fallacy of indifference. The therapeutic positivist regarded the typical philosophical question as ending up with a number of resemblances on one side inclining the mind to say Yes and a number on the other side inclining the mind to say No. The assumption is that one cannot rationally go either way. Is this assumption correct? I think not: and I shall try to say why it is not, and why it is that the only form in which it can be admitted is the moderated form: "Weigh carefully the resemblances on both sides before deciding whether it is possible or not to pronounce one way or the other."

First let us note that questions that lead to this position are not peculiar to philosophy. They present themselves also in science. Is *Euglena viridis* a plant or an animal? It resembles plants in containing chlorophyll and having holophytic nutrition, and animals in possessing a flagellum and not having a cellulose cell wall. It is plausible to say that there is no answer to the question: but I confess I am not sure that this is the right solution. Are viruses animate or inanimate? I do not think it is made impossible ever to decide on

rational grounds that they are animate merely because they resemble the inanimate in being obtainable in crystalline form, and I do not think the biologists think so. Take a less technical example. There are certain creatures from the Isle of Man which resemble cats in many respects, but resemble guinea-pigs in having no tails. Must I not call them cats? Or, if I do, is it a purely arbitrary extension of the word? Or are they not, as I believe, and I am sure you believe also, really cats?

I am maintaining that the refusal to commit one's self, because there are features inclining one to say Yes and features inclining one to say No, is not always the rational attitude and may frequently be the irrational attitude. When a judge has to decide a case in the light of statutes which do not obviously cover the case, there is, to be sure, an element of arbitrariness in his decision, but the process is, taken as a whole, essentially a rational one. There is a right and a wrong decision. If there were not, the whole system of Appeal Courts would be absurd. Their *raison d'être* lies in the assumption that a more careful examination of the facts by cleverer men better versed in the law may afford reasons for reversing the original decision. The procedure is not dissimilar in theological controversy. The interpretation of the fundamental Christian doctrines is a rational process, granted the initial data. Fundamentally the same kind of reasoning is found in administration, and in personal conduct, though the principles we use sit more loosely to us and the "resemblances" that incline us are less determinate.

All these people—the judge, the theologian, the administrator and the man who faces his daily problems of conduct—draw conclusions, though faced with conflicting considerations. Philosophy resembles this kind of reasoning more than it resembles the reasoning of science. It is foolish as some philosophers have done to exalt this type of reasoning, and the all-embracing nature of their subject, in order to depreciate science, by regarding this latter as a kind of rule-of-thumb affair, too limited in its scope to be called rational at all. But it is equally absurd to identify the methods of science with the workings of the human reason. The excursions of famous scientists into the realms of philosophy are sometimes marred by the fact that, having escaped from the rigorous control of scientific method they imagine they have left the domain of reason for that of fancy. This is, however, a more entertaining and less destructive error than that of some of their colleagues who imagine that the problems of conduct and administration can be solved by the scientific method.

That all the higher activities of reason, except science and mathematics, have no rational foundation is an error due to submergence in the things of sense, which results from surrendering in despair the ideal content of life, which itself is strangled and gasps for breath

without faith. The attack on reason by philosophers is made in the name of logic. "Logic," as Samuel Butler said, "is like the sword. Those who appeal to it shall perish by it." I have tried to answer logic with logic, and have been led in the attempt into philosophy. This is not to mind a defect. Philosophy is not to be reduced to logic, as the philosophers of analysis suppose. But there is this much truth distorted in what they say, that philosophy is logic's true self, and the greatest illogicality is a false philosophy. Nor is philosophy science. Analysis, properly understood, is an essential part of philosophy. In the wider sense I have given to it, it includes generalization within the field of common experience by the imaginative recall of that experience. It bears some resemblance to the dialectic of Plato and Aristotle. Nevertheless, I have felt justified in using the word analysis of it, because it bears ever greater resemblance to the procedure which Kant described and practised as analysis. It is employed in ethics, epistemology and logic. By itself it cannot solve the great metaphysical problems of God, freedom and immortality, which are not, as sometimes represented, isolated problems to be solved by gnawing at them like a dog at a bone, but are simply three outstanding cruces which tend to confront every philosopher who attempts a system of philosophy. The fruits of analysis in many fields must be generalized, the generalities united in some sort of system and the system tested by application to other fields, for the construction of a metaphysic. For the task of speculative philosophy is, starting from the phenomena—the conclusions of science, the prepossessions of common sense, and the deliverances of faith—to formulate a coherent and comprehensive account of the universe in its general outlines. If philosophical analysis is, as I have argued, a genuine method of discovery whereby there can be revealed new facts which justify the reformulation of the statements in which the phenomena first present themselves to our minds, the road to metaphysics is not barred and we may still believe the words which My Lady Philosophy addressed to the philosopher Boethius when she appeared to him in his prison cell:

> I will show thee the way which shall carry thee home, I will give thy mind wings to be raised aloft, so that, thrusting aside all distress of mind, thou mayest return in safety to the home of thy fathers, under my guidance, by my pathway, and borne on my wings,[1]

[1] Boethius: *Philosophiae Consolatio*, Book IV, Prose 1.

LANGUAGE AND PHILOSOPHY

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR AN EMPIRICAL APPROACH

A. H. BASSON and D. J. O'CONNOR

> If Aristotle had spoken Chinese or Dacotan he would have had to adopt an entirely different logic or at any rate an entirely different theory of categories.
>
> MAUTHNER: *Kritik der Sprache*, Vol. III, p. 4.

I

PREOCCUPATION with *language* is a notable feature of modern philosophy. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the influence of language on thought, and particularly its influence on philosophical thought, is a leading topic of philosophical discussion in this century. Every philosopher of any note, no matter what his general interests may be, has found it necessary to define his attitude to this problem. The attitude usually adopted consists of an admission that language does have a great influence on thought, and on philosophical thought in particular. More accurately, it is claimed that the structure and grammatical categories, and perhaps the vocabulary, natural to a particular language, *determine* the lines of thought and speculation open to any thinker who uses that language (Note 1). This determination is unimportant in many cases, because the results of our thinking are usually subject to check by appeal to empirical facts. In philosophical thinking, however, no such check is available by the very nature of the case. Accordingly, we cannot tell if the difficulty or apparent insolubility of a philosophical problem is due to the problem itself, or simply due to inadequacies in our language. In a different language, so it is suggested, the problem which is difficult for us might very easily be solved. Indeed, there might not then *be* any such problem, or its solution might be self-evident in this other language. This is the moderate attitude to the language difficulty in philosophy, and it is fair to say that it is almost universally adopted at the present day. In some circles it has acquired the prestige of an indisputable dogma.

A somewhat more extreme view is put forward by those who assert that *all* philosophical problems are results of the inadequacy of language. They hold this view because they believe that statements, or rather *apparent* statements, may be grammatically correct, and yet, at the same time, meaningless. Such statements, assumed to have meaning because they are grammatically correct, generate

insoluble "philosophical" problems. The main preoccupation of those who adopt this view is to construct a language in which philosophical problems do not occur, simply because they are excluded by the grammatical rules of the language. No attempt to construct such a language has yet proved successful, although this may be due to the fact that the initial thought necessary for such an attempt has always been carried out in languages of the Indo-European family, usually English or German.

We have now distinguished a moderate and an extreme view of the influence of language on philosophical thought. The moderate view claims that the difficulty of *some* philosophical problems may be due *partly* to ineffectiveness of the language we use in trying to solve them. In addition, the sorts of problems which arise and naturally present themselves to the thinker, may in part be determined by the language in which the thinker thinks. The more extreme view claims that philosophical problems are *wholly* products of the structural characteristics of a language. Evidently the extreme view implies the more moderate, and consequently disproof of the moderate view would be disproof of the more extreme. The contrary does not hold, of course. Proof of the moderate view would not amount to proof of the extreme view, although it would justify serious examination of the latter. In what follows we shall confine our attention to the moderate view, namely, the claim that the difficulty of some philosophical problems and the occurrence of others may be a direct result of the nature of the language we use.

II

The view that the structure of a language determines partly or wholly the nature and direction of philosophical thought in that language, is itself something of a philosophical curiosity. It is a curiosity because, unlike all the other claims and attitudes of philosophers, it seems to be open to empirical enquiry. There are more than seven thousand different languages now in everyday use. These languages differ widely in grammar, syntax and vocabulary. Surely it is pertinent to enquire if the usual philosophical questions can be posed, and the usual philosophical arguments expressed, in some of these languages which differ most widely from our own. Surely it would reflect on the philosophers' claim if no relevant differences were found. And if relevant differences *were* found, surely it would be very important for philosophers and logicians to know how these differences were connected with the differences of grammar, syntax and vocabulary. In spite of these apparent facts, and in spite of the further fact that it is now almost equivalent to blasphemy in certain circles to suggest that linguistic problems

may have nothing whatever to do with philosophical problems; in spite of all this, not the slightest attempt appears to have been made by philosophers to verify their hypothesis in the usual way. No philosopher has even attempted to give reasons why it should not be so verified.

There may, however, be good reason for this. Clearly, a proper estimate of the relevance, value and methods of such an attempted verification, as well as the attempt itself, would call for a rather rare combination of talents and knowledge. The present writers do not know of anyone possessing the required qualifications of aptitude and profound scholarship both in modern philosophy and logic, and in modern linguistics. They do not even know of anyone claiming these qualifications who has also found it worth while to investigate the matter. Accordingly, while aware of many deficiencies in themselves, particularly on the philological side, they decided to open the question and see what is in it. In the course of the enquiry it soon became clear that philosophers, as usual, were not at all sure of what they meant when they talked about the relation of language to philosophy. Consequently, empirical investigation does not seem to be relevant in any simple and obvious way. Nevertheless, its relevance is still a question which can only be decided by considering what sorts of enquiries might be relevant. Furthermore, it is now most desirable that philosophers should become familiar with the matter and methods of comparative linguistics, if only to avoid making silly and misleading remarks. Examples of silly and misleading remarks are, "the grammatical structure of a sentence may not be a true guide to the logical structure of the proposition for which it stands," and "statements may be grammatically correct, and yet meaningless." Professor Ryle, a singularly able and by no means dogmatic thinker, says, "Expressions of the same grammatical patterns are used to express thoughts of multifarious logical sorts" (Note 2). This may be so, of course, but it is desirable to know what you mean by "grammatical pattern" as well as by "logical sort." Strange as it may seem, grammarians are concerned with actual usage; and they try to obtain by induction from actual usage, *rules* for deciding whether an apparent statement is meaningful or not. Their rules are imperfect because the subject matter is so complex. Philosophers, in so far as they try to determine meaning or lay down rules for deciding meaningfulness, are trying to do just what the lexicographer and grammarian are trying to do, only they omit the preliminary trouble of acquainting themselves with the facts. We suspect that when philosophers talk about grammar and grammatical patterns, they mean "the grammatical rules and categories laid down seventy years ago, and which we learned at school." They believe these grammatical rules and

categories to share the infallibility of a Papal pronouncement *ex cathedra*. The belief is quite unfounded.

This general point of view has no doubt had a good deal of influence in establishing a now popular but quite unverified belief that the "structure of language" (in some unspecified sense of that ambiguous phrase) is an important determinant of the logical "structure" of thought. And some philosophers have not been slow to assume, though they have not always made their assumption explicit, that the undoubted *fact* that we can speak and write in alternative *languages* has some relevance to the truth of the *hypothesis* that we can think in alternative *logics* (Note 3). But whether they say that linguistic structure *determines* logical structure, or like Dr. Wittgenstein (Note 4) that it *conceals* logical structure, a great many philosophers are agreed that language is important to philosophy, even if they are not very certain how it is important or how that importance is to be demonstrated.

III

There seem to be several methods by which the relation between linguistic "structure" (such as it is) and philosophy might be investigated. A desirable preliminary would be to study several widely differing examples of the seven thousand languages available, in order to discover their several structures and the differences between them. This kind of study is found to be peculiarly difficult, and the results would, in any case, need to be expressed in a special symbolism. Philologists usually study the comparative grammar and syntax of a closely related family of languages only. The technical terms they develop in the course of such a study is appropriate only to the particular family of languages studied. There is indeed a tendency to adopt terms from Latin grammar, but this is undesirable because such terms acquire a new sense in the course of transference. A few attempts have been made to supply a universal symbolism for comparative analysis (Note 5), but these can hardly be regarded as satisfactory. Consequently, comparative syntax in the wide sense cannot at present be undertaken, simply because there is no basis for comparison. There is an opening here for those in the philosophical world who are adept at constructing symbolisms.

Failing this preliminary, it might be useful to compare the general tone and preoccupations of the philosophies native to different languages. Or we might compare philosophies of the same tradition, but worked out in different languages. For example, it would be instructive to make a close comparative study of the mediaeval philosophers of the Aristotelian school who did not use Indo-European languages. Avicenna and Averrhoes wrote in Arabic;

Maimonides in Hebrew. Their interpretations of Aristotle were both profound and individual, and it would be interesting to know if any of these individualities can be traced to peculiarities of syntax and grammar in the Semitic languages. Indeed, these philosophers would serve admirably as test cases for verifying the hypothesis that Aristotle's logic and metaphysics is the natural result of Indo-European linguistic structure, because in this instance we have adequate controls, namely the Scholastics, who wrote in Latin. The present writers have been unable to trace any work done in this particular direction.

In the other connection it should be possible to compare, not only different linguistic expressions of the same philosophical tradition, but also entirely different traditions. There are many Oriental systems of philosophy, and these could be compared with one another, and with philosophies in the European tradition. There are, of course, European scholars who specialize in Oriental philosophy, but their interest in the subject seems usually to be a scholar's interest and not a philosopher's. Moreover, they are not commonly familiar with the current problems and controversies of European philosophy.

A variation of these lines of approach, which does not call for such extensive scholarship, would be to undertake a critical examination of translations of classical works of European philosophy into non-Aryan languages. Clearly there is a very wide field of enquiry open in this direction, and it is impossible to decide *a priori* what might be discovered. In any case, surely it is not too much to expect of philosophers who profess an interest in problems of languages, that they should acquire a working knowledge of one or two non-Aryan languages, so as to familiarize themselves at first hand with the possibility of expression in such languages of philosophical problems which may or may not be generated by peculiarities of Indo-European grammatical and syntactical structure (Note 6).

IV

After some consideration the present writers found it desirable to set aside for the time being all the approaches so far suggested. Their decision arose partly from consciousness of lack of the necessary knowledge, and partly from the thought that some more definite information is required as to the value of such enquiries, before the work entailed by them could be justified. In order to satisfy themselves on this latter point, they determined to canvass the opinions of a number of professional philologists on a specially limited aspect of the question. To this end a communication was drafted in the following terms:

"Certain contemporary philosophers have suggested that the so-called *metaphysical* problems are a direct result of inadequacies in the structure of language. They suggest that the *linguistic* (i.e. grammatical and/or syntactical) form of a sentence is not always a true guide to the *logical* form of the proposition which it expresses or represents, and consequently sentences may be constructed which are linguistically correct but which either do not express any proposition at all (i.e. are strictly speaking nonsensical) or express propositions whose *logical* form cannot be derived from the *logical* form of the corresponding original proposition, although the linguistic forms of the sentences can be derived from the linguistic forms of the corresponding original sentences. The exact meaning of statements of this kind is not altogether clear but the following is a fair outline of the problem.

"(i) One sentence of a certain linguistic form may express or represent two or more propositions of *different* logical forms. This may result in errors of *at least* two kinds as follows:

"A sentence S(A) may be the linguistic expression of two or more propositions $p(a_1)(a_2)$ . . . having different logical forms. It may be possible by a linguistic operation to construct another sentence S(B).

"(*a*) There may be only *one* proposition $p(b_1)$ corresponding to S(B) although S(A) expresses two or more propositions. In this case we may be led by analogy of the valid logical operation $p(a_1) - p(b_1)$ to assume the validity of similar operations $p(a_2) - p(b_2)$, $p(a_3) - p(b_3)$ etc. In this case, $p(b_2)$ $p(b_3)$ . . . will not exist and S(B) *interpreted as representing* these fictitious propositions will be *meaningless*, though it will have meaning if it is *interpreted as representing* $p(b_1)$.

"(*b*) There may be for each member of the class of propositions $p(a_{1\text{-}n})$ expressed by S(A) a corresponding class of propositions $p(b_{1\text{-}n})$ expressed by S(B). In this case, because there is only one *linguistic* operation representing *n* logical operations there will be considerable danger of inferring, e.g., $p(b_2)$ from $p(a_1)$ etc., and such inferences will, of course, be invalid.

"(ii) The difficulty may be generalized as follows: suppose we have a class of propositions of logical form A, and a corresponding class of sentences of linguistic form *a*. Suppose there is a *logical* operation (O) which transforms propositions of form A into propositions of form B and a corresponding *linguistic* operation (*o*) which transforms *sentences* of form *a* into sentences of form *b*. Then *b* sentences will represent B propositions. Now suppose we define a further class of propositions (A_1) such that operation (O) cannot be applied to them. Suppose these propositions also to be represented by sentences of form *a*. Then by the linguistic operation (*o*), (*ao*) = *b*, and there will be a class of *b* propositions which will

not express any propositions. Such sentences are *empty* or meaningless sentences of the type referred to in (i)(*a*) above.

"Now it has been suggested that all *metaphysical* sentences are *empty* or meaningless sentences and though they *appear* to have meaning, this is because linguistic form is not always a true guide to logical form.

"It will be observed that the foregoing definition does not establish the existence of empty sentences in any particular language, and in general we would expect languages exhibiting different grammatical and syntactical forms to have different philosophical problems (if all this is true) subject to the following proviso: the difference in linguistic form between language A and language B must be such that some propositions of different logical forms must be expressed by the same linguistic form in A and different linguistic forms in B. If this were so, we might expect a philosophical problem to exist in A which does not exist in B.

"As the main body of Western philosophical speculation has been carried on through the medium of languages of the Indo-European family it has been suggested that the structural similarity of these languages has determined, to an unknown extent, the nature of the problems which have arisen in Western philosophy. This suggestion is, prima facie, a plausible one but no evidence has ever been offered in support of it. It can be confirmed or refuted only, if at all, by an examination of the main points of difference in linguistic structure between languages of the Indo-European group and the non-Indo-European language groups. Such an examination requires the collaboration of philologists and philosophers.

"It is, of course, of great importance to philosophy that some attempt should be made to verify this suggestion, because if it could be shown to have any foundation, philosophers would have to make very considerable changes in the direction of their enquiries."

In order to give our correspondents a guide to the kind of information required, several questions, both general and particular, were asked. As will be seen, the particular questions were about *logical terms* and the various uses of the verb *to be*. We afterwards found that the *logical* questions do not seem to be very important or relevant. Certain problems which do appear to be relevant were not considered, and these will be mentioned in the sequel. The text of our questions was as follows:

"We would accordingly be glad of your opinions on the questions set out below. It is not required that the answers should be detailed or that any features should be noted which are, in your opinion, clearly irrelevant to the problem as we have outlined it. We would however like to ask that, where an important feature of linguistic structure is noted, a simple illustrative sentence should be quoted,

together with two English translations, one idiomatic and the other a point-for-point transverbalization of the sentence to show the features of syntactical structure.

"(1) What are the main grammatical and/or syntactical features of the non-Indo-European languages with which you are most familiar, and which are, so far as you are aware, peculiar to the languages in question?

"(2) Are there any other grammatical and/or syntactical features of the languages which though not peculiar to them are, nevertheless, not found in languages of the Indo-European group?

"(3) The following class of linguistic expressions is of special logical importance. Do expressions of this type in the languages in question exemplify any features of the type referred to in (1) or (2)?

(A) Quantifiers.
- (*a*) (Universal), 'all,' 'any,' 'every,' 'no,' etc.; e.g., no men are mortal.
- (*b*) (Particular), 'some,' 'most,' 'a few;' e.g. some men are tall.
- (*c*) (Singular), 'the,' 'this,' 'that.'

(B) The verb 'to be' used
- (*a*) As a logical copula.
  - (i) Predication: The leaf is green.
  - (ii) Class-inclusion: All men are mortal.
  - (iii) Class-membership: The tree is an oak.
  - (iv) Identity: George VI is king of England.
  - (v) Formal implication: Wisdom is valuable.
- (*b*) In an existential sense; e.g. God is.
- (*c*) In any other sense peculiar to the languages in question.

(C) Logical relations.
- (i) Disjunction: 'or.'
- (ii) Conjunction: 'and.'
- (iii) Implication: 'if . . . then. . . .'
- (iv) Negation: 'not.'

"We realize that it is not unlikely that, in a good many languages, no significant features of the types mentioned above, will be found. A 'nil' report will, however, be just as valuable for our purposes, as it is of as much importance to us to know that no differences exist in the case of any particular language as to know of differences which do exist in other cases.

"It may be that other points of importance not set out above will occur to you. If so, we would be glad if you would mention them. We would be glad of any references to philological works which you think are particularly important."

The information obtained as a result of this inquiry was drawn

from more than twenty languages, representing twelve language families other than Indo-European. Much of the evidence was curiously barren, but some was remarkably suggestive. We now attempt to summarize the information we have, and then draw some conclusions.

V

Of the *general* information, the most important was to this effect:

(1) The word "structure" has some very misleading associations which make it a dangerous word to apply to language. When we talk of linguistic structure, we are referring to the relations between linguistic terms or units. These terms or units are not at present defined with sufficient accuracy to enable us to put much meaning on the phrase. For example, one of our correspondents informs us that "the linguistic terms used by philologists are not properly defined (and it is difficult to see how they can be). So the terms 'grammatical feature,' 'syntactical feature,' 'sentence,' etc. used by you are really without definition. I think that perhaps your term 'grammatical and/or syntactical feature' should really be replaced by some such term as 'semantic feature' (a bad name), defined roughly as 'linguistic feature not solely connected with the sound-aspect of a language.' . . . For surely you must take account of lexicography as well as grammar and syntax, since in many languages, particularly those such as Chukchee, which tend to incorporate the noun into the verb, there can be little real distinction between grammar and lexicography." Another correspondent states, "The structure of every language is the result of an historical development in which logic has played no part. Languages are not developed according to the rules or principles of grammarians. Such rules and principles are artificial and unreal. They have been defined as a *post mortem on usage.*" Of course, no philosopher would dispute the truth of these statements, but far too many appear to ignore their implications.

(2) The unsatisfactory state of linguistic terminology, together with the tendency to apply (or misapply) to other languages, the grammatical terms and categories proper to Latin, tends to make differences of structure appear much greater than they really are, or may even induce an apparent discrepancy where no discrepancy really exists. Thus, another correspondent tells us, "Finnish infinitival and participle constructions as analysed by grammarians appear totally different forms of expression from anything used in the English language. In fact they have very close parallels in English and can often be translated almost literally. The effect of this is that Finns and Englishmen cannot merely say exactly the same things, but can often say them in much the same way." This

kind of fact, together with the fact that translation is possible, tends to indicate the essentially isomorphic nature of languages, rather than the opposite. What is lost in translation is the emotive aspect, and there is as yet no indication that philosophical problems are untranslatable. It may be, of course, that they are sometimes untranslatable, and this fact, if it were a fact, would indicate the essentially emotive character of philosophical statements. Nevertheless, no evidence has, so far as we know, yet been produced to support such a thesis. There have been plenty of arguments a priori but no facts.

(3) The connection between grammatical and logical form is obscure. Philologists tell us that grammatical form is not self-evident, and philosophers tell us that logical form is not self-evident even if the grammatical form is known. It is not clear how philosophers can claim to discover logical form unless it is connected in some way with grammatical form. In any case, no examples have come to our notice, of languages where certain logical forms *cannot* be exhibited in sentence-form, although in ordinary speech the logical form is often allowed to remain implicit. In this connection, one eminent philologist has summarized his conclusion in these words: "The diversity of modes of expression in no way entails a greater or less degree of ability to indicate the fundamental logical distinctions, e.g. determination, definiteness and indefiniteness, conjunction, disjunction, hypothesis. Some categories are *normally* left implicit with zero-forms but the point I would stress is that all the languages named appear capable in an emergency of making the logical formulation explicit. It seems then that, so far as anything at all can be said on this point, logical form *can* be exhibited by grammatical form in any language, but this is not always done, mainly for reasons of brevity and convenience in expression."

(4) One of our correspondents who has had experience in studying Berkeley and Hume in the medium of Twi (an Akan language of the Gold Coast), informs us that the usual Berkeleian and Humeian problems and their connected arguments can be expressed in this language. This is so in spite of the fact that Twi possesses three different verbal forms corresponding roughly with the different uses of the English verb *to be*. The difficulty of such translations is mainly due to verbal inadequacies in Twi, notably the absence of abstract expressions. This deficiency is of much greater importance than any differences of grammatical or syntactical structure (Note 7).

VI

The particular information obtained is summarized as follows:

(1) *Quantifiers:* Generally speaking the Semitic languages use

nouns for universal quantifiers, e.g. "totality of men" for "all men"; "nought of men" for "no men." A number of languages have no means of expressing "no" or "not" directly, e.g. Ancient Egyptian, Finnish, Arabic; and some languages have a special negative form of the verg, e.g. Ancient Egyptian, Finnish, Tamil. One of our correspondents writes, "Many languages do not make such a clear cut distinction as English between 'some' and 'any,' but all I have surveyed can at a pinch distinguish between an unspecified particular and a no-matter-which particular." The word "some" is expressed in Finnish by a partitive genetive, e.g. "Buy some bread." (This is reminiscent of a usage in some Indo-European languages, e.g. *γεύσομαι τοῦ οἴνου*, and is probably not a very unusual construction.)

(2) *Articles:* Even within the Indo-European family there is considerable diversity in the usage of definite and indefinite articles. English, Latin, Greek and Swedish all show different methods of expression. There are no special features in non-Indo-European modes of expressing "definite descriptions." Changes of inflexion are sometimes used, e.g. Finnish, "Give me the bread" (accusative case), "Give me some bread" (genitive case).

(3) *The verb To Be:* Some very interesting and possibly important information was supplied to us on this topic. Most interesting was the large number of languages which make a sharp distinction between the existential "is" and the copula. Semitic languages have in general no copula, but Hebrew and Assyrian both have a special word for "exists." Malay (an Austronesian language) is similar to Hebrew in this respect. Tibetan uses "yin" for the copula and "yod" for existence, but a sentence like "That hill is high" might use either word according to sense and context. In Ancient Egyptian the copula is omitted unless it is modally qualified; and in general it seems to be the rule rather than the exception to omit the copula. Perhaps this should not surprise us in view of the fact that the relations between the referents of "green" and "leaf" in "the green leaf" and in "the leaf is green" is the same. There are several languages which have more exact means of expressing the various nuances of the English verb "to be." Even inside the Indo-European family, Spanish and Portuguese distinguish accidental and essential modes of existence by means of the separate verbs "ser" and "estar." Outside the Indo-European family, Hungarian uses "van" and "vannak" for "is" in the existential sense, and also when the sentence answers a question "How?" or "Where?" but not when the question is "Who?" or "What?" Twi has three separate verbs for the "is" of existence, the "is" of predication (i.e. class-membership and class-inclusion) and the "is" of identity. Tamil, which omits the copula, has two verbs for "existence," namely,

"undu," which implies existence in a general sense ("such things exist," "there are some sheep on the hillside") (this is also a case where "some" or "any" is expressed by a verb), and "iru," which implies existence in a particular sense in a certain location or context ("my brother is in the house," "my sheep are in the next field"). Each of these verbs has a separate negative form ("illai" for "undu" and "alla" for "iru"). In addition to these distinctions, Tamil has a further verb, "āgu," which is used somewhat in the manner of the German "werden," except that it is not used like "werden" to express the passive voice.

(4) *Logical Constants:* Little information was forthcoming on this topic. Except for the references to negation quoted above, there seem to be few forms peculiar to particular languages (Note 8).

VII

The main points may now be summarized. (1) There is considerable confusion in grammatical terminology and classification. Nothing has been done towards classifying the seven thousand odd languages that exist, or towards classifying their semantic features. It is therefore rash to assume that what we, with our school knowledge of grammar, take to be the grammatical structure of a sentence, *is* the grammatical structure in any important sense of the phrase. Consequently, *if* philosophical problems arise from this sort of confusion, it is more correct to say they arise from *ignorance of grammar*, than it is to say they arise from the misleading character of grammatical structure. (2) If grammatical structure, in some appropriate sense of that ambiguous phrase, can *never* be said to be a reliable guide to logical structure, it is difficult to see what *can* be. (3) Divergence of grammatical categories is not necessarily a guarantee of divergence of structure. (4) Philosophical works have in fact been translated without losing their essential character, at least so far as we can judge. (5) Quantification and logical constants do not seem to present much of interest, but the development of the ideas of entailment and causal connection might prove a useful subject for study. (6) The verbs "to be" and "to exist" exhibiting a number of interesting variations which might well be reflected in philosophical discussions. To these six we may now add three other points which are of obvious importance, but which were not included in our enquiry. These are: (7) The expression of *tense* in various languages is extremely diverse, and has different uses. In primitive languages generally, little if any distinction is made between spatial and temporal remoteness. This is obviously an important matter, and could easily have a bearing on the many philosophical problems connected with Time. (8) The expression of the first-personal pro-

noun, and (9) expression of the distinction between appearance and reality, both require investigation. All three of these points are famous sources of philosophical disagreement.

VIII

It is clear that no definite conclusions can be drawn from our scanty evidence, partly because of the great bulk of material which remains unexamined, partly because of the exceedingly unsatisfactory state of linguistic science, and partly because of the three omissions mentioned. With this in mind, however, we can say that absolutely no evidence exists at present to support the hypothesis that philosophical problems are partly or wholly due to inadequacies of language. There is absolutely nothing to suggest that a "better language" might solve our philosophical problems for us. This leads us to reflect on the initial problem. When philosophers say or hint or imply that their problems are linguistic, they certainly seem to be suggesting that a better language might avoid these problems, or that other languages might produce other problems. *If* they mean this, it is their business to produce evidence for such an assertion, either by producing examples in existing languages, or by constructing artificial languages. The first is more necessary than the second, because it would be too strange if, although the problems could not arise in some artificial language, they all arose in every natural language. It would lead us to doubt the adequacy of the artificial language rather than that of the natural languages. If the philosophers do not mean all this, it is most desirable that they should say just exactly what they do mean, and do so in some less confusing terms.

Before leaving this matter it is desirable to say a little more about the connection between grammatical and logical form. It is maintained that grammatical structure is not always a true guide to logical structure, and therefore the former is *never* a reliable guide to the latter. Modern logicians tend to contrast themselves with traditional logicians in this respect. Aristotle's mistake was to believe that all propositions have the same logical form. He did not believe that grammatical form was a true guide to logical form, since grammatical forms were various even in the Greek language of his time. Consequently Aristotle did not believe that grammatical form was *always* a true guide to logical form, but he did believe that a particular grammatical form, namely, the subject-predicate form, *was* a true guide to logical form; and that *all* propositions could be expressed in this form. Modern logicians appear to differ from Aristotle only in believing that there are several grammatical forms which are true guides to logical form. They agree with Aristotle

in trying to reduce different grammatical expressions to an arbitrarily selected set, and they differ from him only in so far as their set contains several members, whereas Aristotle's set contains only one member.

It appears that something must be postulated as a guide to divergencies between grammatical and logical form. A guide very often adopted consists in the appearance of philosophical problems. If philosophical problems appear, this indicates divergence of grammatical and logical form, if not, not. Now if this is *postulated* it amounts to a *definition* of the kind of divergence at issue. Such a definition cannot be questioned in the ordinary sense; we can only ask if it is a fruitful one. It would be fruitful if languages could be constructed able to express everything except philosophy. Many attempts have been made to construct such languages, but none have proved satisfactory. They have not been satisfactory because those who construct such languages have proceeded simply by ignoring or omitting those features of grammar and syntax which are most closely connected with philosophical problems. These are, as we have noted, the verbs "to be" and "to exist," the first personal pronoun, the expression of tense, and the distinction between appearance and reality. In Mr. Russell's object-language, for example, all these are omitted. Mr. Ayer's sense-datum language includes the first-personal pronoun, but since it occurs in the same way in all his sense-datum statements, it cannot be said to form a necessary and significant part of his language. The logical languages of Professors Carnap and Quine omit all reference to tense.

In the result it is hardly surprising that the relevant philosophical problems cannot be expressed in such languages, and other problems, as it were *genuine* pseudo-problems, do arise from the inadequacy of these languages as means of expression. The problem of the speckled hen, and the difficulty about the movements of the observer (Note 9) are well known examples of such pseudo-problems. They arise simply from the inadequacy of these artificial languages as means of expression, as compared with the natural languages. The artificial subject-predicate language of Aristotle suffered from similar deficiencies.

We conclude that, although it may be true to say that philosophical problems are *connected* with linguistic inadequacies, it is very misleading to say they *result from* such inadequacies. In the first place linguistic structure is not fixed and immutable. On the contrary it is essentially flexible. In the second place it is putting the cart before the horse. It would be much less misleading to say that linguistic inadequacies are consequences of unsolved philosophical problems. Modern philosophers have observed that any philosophical problem which can be stated in language is reflected

in language. This is obviously true, but it is false to conclude that the problem *is* nothing but the reflection. On the other hand it may be that philosophical problems exist which have no connection whatever with linguistic inadequacy, although it is by no means clear what *sort* of solution such problems would demand. After all, the solution of any general problem, particularly a non-empirical problem (mathematical problems, for example), is reflected in the development of a new and "more adequate" notation. We do not therefore say that all such problems are pseudo-problems and *results of* notational inadequacy.

In addition to this, it seems that artificial languages cannot be developed in isolation from any natural language. New notations must be alterations, improvements, additions to the language in use. To suppose otherwise was the very mistake of the classical systematic philosophers. A new notation may be developed to solve a philosophical problem, but it is clearly beside the point to develop a notation which merely avoids the problem altogether. This is the trap awaiting those who insist that philosophical problems are simply results of notational inadequacy.

Finally, we may point out that a natural language must be capable of expressing incompatible propositions, and not only incompatible *factual* propositions, but also incompatible propositions *of logic*. The structure of a natural language is thus not determined by logical considerations. It is determined, in so far as it is determined at all, by *philosophical* considerations. Because philosophers have ignored linguistics ever since the invention of Latin grammatical terminology, it is not surprising that this terminology now misleads them. There is no systematic means of expression in linguistics at the present time, and this would seem to be an important field for philosophical enquiry. We would however suggest that those philosophers who intend to pursue the matter should take their subject seriously, at least to the extent of acquainting themselves with the results gained in modern linguistic science. Perhaps they would then find themselves able to return once more to a sincere appreciation of philosophical problems, instead of offering cheap and easy methods of ignoring them.

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SUMMARY

I. It is suggested that *language* may have an unknown influence on thought, particularly philosophical thought. There are two attitudes to this suggestion, one moderate, one extreme.

II. The possibility of an *empirical investigation* of the problem is considered. Such an investigation may or may not be relevant, but it is at least desirable that this should be determined. Only in this way can we decide *what* sort of investigation will settle the question, and only in this way can we see what sort of question it is.

III. Several possible lines of approach are considered, namely (1) study of comparative grammar and syntax, (2) study of different expressions of the same philosophy in different languages, (3) comparison of different philosophies native to different languages.

IV. The lines described in III have to be set aside for certain reasons. The text of our inquiry addressed to philologists is given. Opinions are asked for on some general and special aspects of the question.

V. Replies bring to light the following general points: (1) Linguistic science is not sufficiently well developed for us to be able to talk without ambiguity, of the *structure* of a sentence. (2) Apparent differences of structure are sometimes created by the misleading linguistic terminology in use. (3) The connection between grammatical and logical form is obscure. It is not clear how the latter is discovered even if the former is assumed to be known. (4) Lack of abstract terms seems a greater obstacle to translation than difference of structure.

VI. Information is given about the expression of quantification, being, existence and logical constants in various languages. There are striking variations in the expressions of the various meanings of the verb "to be."

VII. The information in V and VI is summarised. Three additional matters of importance are noted: (1) tense, (2) the first-personal pronoun, (3) the distinction between appearance and reality.

VIII. There is nothing to suggest that a "better language" might solve philosophical problems. In the matter of grammatical and logical form, modern logicians do not appear to differ from Aristotle in any significant way. The insufficiencies of some modern artificial languages are noted. We conclude that linguistic inadequacies result from unsolved philosophical problems, not vice versa.

NOTES

1. Perhaps not "determine" in the strict sense, since if this were so nothing could be done about it. There is the same sort of ambiguity here as in Hume's principle of association. It is a gently persuasive force rather than a necessary connection. It then seems that the sort of philosophical problem at the bottom of "determination of thought by language" is the same as is at the bottom of "determination of thought by association of ideas."

2. *Philosophical Arguments, an Inaugural Lecture,* Oxford, 1945, p. 9. Our remarks must not be taken as a criticism of the substance of Professor Ryle's lecture.

3. Compare some very interesting remarks by Dr. Waismann, "Alternative Logics," *Proc. Arist. Soc.*, 1945–6.

4. "Language disguises thought; so that from the external form of the clothes one cannot infer the form of the thought they clothe, because the external form of the clothes is constructed with quite another object than to let the form of the body be recognised," *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus,* p. 63.

5. See Jesperson, *Analytic Syntax*, and the references quoted therein.

6. Professor Broad made this suggestion some years ago. (*Proc. Arist. Soc. Suppl.* Vol. XV, p. 113.)

7. Purely verbal difficulties of translation are discussed by Mr. I. A. Richards, *Mencius on the Mind* (London, 1932).

8. There is a discussion of the development of the ideas of implication and causal connection in Chinese thought in Mr. E. R. Hughes' *The Great Learning and The Mean in Action.*

9. The "Speckled Hen" problem was invented by Professor Ryle. It is discussed by Mr. Chisholm (*Mind,* N.S. 204, p. 368), and appears to be a peculiarity of languages which lack any means of expressing the distinction between appearance and reality. The other problem is similar. It is briefly expounded by Professor Price in his criticism of Mr. A. J. Ayer's "Foundations of Empirical Knowledge," *Mind,* N.S. 199, p. 292.

DISCUSSION: *The Perennial Philosophy*[1]

The phrase *philosophia perennis* is said to have been first used by Leibniz. It has been adopted and freely employed by the Catholic Neo-Thomists, for whom it means a development of the Aristotelianism, modified by strong Neoplatonic elements, which Arabian scholars transmitted to the first Renaissance in the West. It claims also to be a return to the early Christian philosophy of religion, a fusion of Hellenistic and Jewish thought, the latter itself a syncretistic religion with many Persian and other borrowings. The controversy, directed against various modern philosophies, has been conducted with great ability by such writers as Gilson, Maritain, Sheen, Watkin, Dawson and D'Arcy, whose books would perhaps have received more attention from independent thinkers, but for the suspicion which surrounds apparent attempts to revive the methods and inhibitions of the medieval schoolmen.

There has been a parallel movement in the Orthodox Eastern Church, represented in Russian by Frank, Bardyaeff, Solovioff and Lossky. These writers are more Platonic and more fearlessly mystical than the Thomists. Origen in the East has more weight than Augustine.

The phrase *philosophia perennis* has also been annexed by the American Wilbur Urban, in his very able book *The Intelligible World*. The Great Tradition, as he calls it, is above the opposition between realism and idealism. It rests on the ultimate inseparability of value and reality. Our standard is what man recognizes as value when his life is fullest. *Ens est unum, verum, bonum*. Historicism turns the absolutes of religion into the relatives of an evolutionary process; psychology and biology reduce faith to an instinct in the service of life. Modernism has ended in a philosophy of illusionism which includes science itself. Permanent presuppositions are turned into gratuitous assumptions, and enduring postulates into plain prejudices. A certain emancipation from slavery to time is, as Bertrand Russell says, essential to philosophic thought. And yet we cannot, with Whitehead, refuse to consider the space-time problem in relation to values. Bergson and others pack time, or space-time, with meanings and values which do not belong to them, and this is the only thing that gives to modern doctrines of emergence the apparent intelligibility which they seem to have. We have no right to endow time with a *nisus*, to replace the old idea of providence, and even to become the begetter of the Deity. There is no element of direction in space and time. Space and time are only the warp and woof of the canvas on which we draw our pictures of ponderable and measurable things. The intelligible world is non-spatial and non-temporal. If mutual externality is the condition of things in the world of sense, mutual compenetration is the character of the spiritual world. If we regard reality as a realm of values, phenomenal and noumenal may be translated into instrumental and intrinsic. May we not think of eternity as a mode in which we express absolute value? The solution of the riddle of space and time, if there be a solution, lies outside space and time.

With all this I heartily agree. But when Urban tries to relate the modern postulate of human perfectibility and universal progress with the Second Law of Thermodynamics, the principle of Carnot as the French call it, it seems to me that he is as little successful as all others who have attempted

[1] *The Perennial Philosophy*. By ALDOUS HUXLEY. (1946. London: Chatto and Windus. Pp. vii + 358. 12*s*. 6*d*. net.)

to reconcile two contradictory theories of process in the cosmos. He holds, rightly in my opinion, that ultimately the time process is irrelevant to value, because value can neither come into being nor pass out of being. But he cannot give up the notion that the world is somehow getting better and better, and refuses to allow that entropy means the ultimate vital and physical extinction of the universe. "To speak for the universe in terms of narrow and abstract predictions of physics and astronomy is to betray a bias of mind that is provincial." I agree that "there is no such thing as an entropy of value." But I cannot agree that we can accept a theory of "progress, with its notion of destiny, which makes of history an unique and individual whole," nor that evolution involves the idea of a universal *nisus*. Like Herbert Fisher, I can find no evidence for a unique *nisus* in history. Nor, if we pack the time process with intrinsic values, can we agree with Bosanquet that "for a philosophy that knows its business, the law of degradation makes no difference." Bosanquet, of course, has no use for this time-philosophy. William James suggests that "the last expiring pulsation of the universe's life may be, I am so happy and perfect that I can stand it no longer"—perhaps the silliest remark ever made by a great man. I do not think that Urban is really doubtful about the philosophy which he expounds; but the problem of time has not yet been solved. Science seems, once again, to be resolving itself into mathematical symbols. But mathematics knows nothing of irreversible processes, nor of a *nisus* which controls cause and effect. Sir James Jeans' mathematical God, whether he is x^n or the square root of minus one, must be puzzled by the perishing universe which is the "moving image" of the unchanging. It is certainly puzzling to those who do not think that subjective idealism is a legitimate road of escape. Eddington admitted that he could see no way out of the dilemma.

And now we have a book by Aldous Huxley, duly labelled *The Perennial Philosophy*. The development in the thought of this brilliant writer towards a spiritual religion was already apparent in his *Ends and Means* (1937). He is now quite definitely a mystical philosopher. The same tendency is manifest in other independent thinkers. To myself, as is natural, it appears as one of the very few encouraging signs in the dismal age in which our lot is cast. But the perennial philosophy, for Huxley, goes much further back than Thomas Aquinas, further than Origen and Plotinus, further than St. Paul and the Fourth Gospel. It is the philosophy of India, and of the whole mystical tradition, which is fundamentally the same in all countries and behind all creeds. So at least our author thinks.

There is more than one way of studying history. We may describe it as a series of attempts to establish a decent and civilized life, interrupted and sometimes destroyed by periodical senseless wars. Parochial squabbles wrecked the two most gracious civilizations in history, those of ancient Greece and medieval Italy. The same fate now threatens the Renaissance civilization of Europe, which may or may not be now engaged in co-operative suicide.

But history may also be the biography of ideas. From this point of view we may ask whether there has been a perennial philosophy, as old not as the human race, but as the higher religion, and whether we can assign a date for its appearance. Strangely enough we can answer the latter question.

The most important period in the history of religion is not the first century of our era, but the middle of the last millennium before Christ. Almost at the same time a higher type of religion appeared in China, India, Persia, the Hellenic cities, and Palestine. The Upanishads, followed by Buddha, Laotze and Confucius in China, the spread of Zoroastranism in Persia, the Ionic philosophers and Pythagoras among the Greeks, and the later Hebrew

prophets, mark a new era in human thought. When we compare the theology of Jeremiah, Micah, and the later Psalms with that of the so-called historical books, we must admit that we are not dealing with the same religion. It is, as Christopher Dawson says, a spiritual change of profound significance, the discovery of a new world of absolute and unchanging reality. The later prophecy has its culmination in the Gospel of Christ, "the prophet of Nazareth in Galilee."

The wind of the Spirit bloweth where it listeth, and we need not discuss why this unique revelation took place at this particular time. But one fact seems to be well established. The flowering times of humanity follow the fusion of two cultures. In Greece the northern invaders mixed with the "Pelasgians." Hebrew thought was deeply affected by the Exile. Arabian philosophy flourished at the two ends of Islamic conquest, in Spain and Persia. Indian thought has been fertilized by the Aryans and by later invaders. Kabir is claimed as a co-religionist both by Moslems and Hindus. That Christianity is a syncretistic religion there can be no doubt. Isolation always tends to produce stagnation.

Even in the Catholic Church there was a good deal of what the Greeks called theocrasia, until dogma and cultus froze. The birthday of Mithras the Invincible Sun became the birthday of the Sun of Righteousness. The December Saturnalia are still honoured with plum pudding and yule logs, and by presents of a turkey to Bob Cratchit. The Isis of Apuleius, the Queen of heaven, took kindly to her promotion to be *μήτηρ θεοῦ*. In Cyprus there is a church dedicated to Panagia Aphroditessa, the Blessed Virgin Aphrodite. The *Aencadum genetrix, hominum divomque voluptas, alma Venus*, like many gay young women, has become ultra-respectable in her old age.

But these accommodations must not be too long deferred. There is no give and take now between Moslems and Hindus in India, nor even between separated branches of the Christian Church. And yet it may not be too late, if both sides realize that their unwillingness to learn is doing them both harm. It has been said that Christianity and Buddhism are both suffering from their refusal to respect each other. Radhakrishnan's stimulating book on Eastern and Western thought gives a long list of European and American writers who have acknowledged great obligations to Indian philosophy, and this writer himself, like Rabindranath Tagore, has not studied European philosophy in vain. Much, however, remains to be done, and, as Huxley sees clearly, the rapprochement must be through mystical religion, the communion of the soul with God, which is religion in its essential foundation.

The perennial philosophy, says Huxley, is the metaphysic that recognizes a divine reality substantial to the world; a psychology that finds in the soul something similar to or even identical with divine reality; an ethic that places man's final end in the knowledge of the ground of all being. Such knowledge can be won by those who fulfil the conditions upon which alone it can be gained. It is a faculty which, as Plotinus says, "all possess but few use." Only the pure in heart and poor in spirit can come to unitive knowledge. All the exponents of the perennial philosophy agree that man is a kind of trinity composed of body, soul, and spirit. The distinction between soul and spirit is much emphasized by St. Paul, whose *pneuma*, as the Greek Fathers recognized, is almost identical with the Platonic *nous*, and, as Huxley insists, with the Indian *atman*. Christianity, he says, has been overlaid by an idolatrous preoccupation with events and things in time, regarded as intrinsically sacred and divine. The mystics have gone some way towards liberating it from this unfortunate servitude to historic fact. Modern idolaters of progress prefer an impossible existence on dry land to love, joy and peace in our native ocean (p. 107.)

The way of life may be summed up as charity, the marks of which are disinterestedness, tranquillity and humility. That disinterestedness, or as Huxley used to say non-attachment, as the root and flower of religion, is also the creed of Walter Lippmann.

Another important distinction is that between intellect (in the scholastic sense) and reason, between *nous* and *dianoia*. Neglect of this distinction had led to much ignorant censure of "Greek intellectualism," encouraged by modern pragmatism.

The doctrine of an evolving God, with a passionate concern not with eternity but with future time, has coloured not only such popular philosophy as that of Wells, but that of Alexander and other leaders of thought. It is not Christian. Bosanquet vainly protested that to throw our ideals into the future is the death of sane idealism. The temptation has been too strong. The future, as Anatole France says, is a convenient place in which to store our dreams.

The eternal Now is a consciousness; the temporal world is known, sustained and perpetually created by an eternal consciousness. Eternal life "stands in the knowledge" of the Godhead. Popular religion has forgotten eternity and occupied itself with events in time. "Into the yawning void thus created flowed the tide of political idolatry; of which the practical consequences are total war, revolution and tyranny." (p. 278.) In the words of William Law, whose greatness Huxley appreciates, "religion in the hands of self serves only to discover vices of a worse kind than in nature left to itself. Pride, self-exaltation, hatred and persecution, under a cloak of religious zeal, will sanctify actions which nature left to itself would be ashamed to own."

This book, enriched by copious and well chosen quotations from the masters of the spiritual life, is probably the most important treatise on mysticism that we have had for many years. But many will think that it is more Buddhist than Christian. Crucial questions suggest themselves. Was the Christian revelation a mere disclosure of timeless truths, or do happenings in time affect supertemporal reality? Is the conflict with evil a real battle, still undecided? Is the growth of soul into spirit rightly described as self-noughting—*ich bin entworden*, as the German mystics said? Many of the Christian mystics have used this language. "Leave nothing of myself in me," Crashaw makes St. Teresa pray. But surely personality is enlarged, not transcended, as we advance in the spiritual life. Personality must be preserved, Plotinus says. δεῖ ἕκαστον ἕκαστον εἶναι. In the spiritual world, as he pictures it, we are transparent to each other, because there is no longer anything that separates us. But this does not mean that we are no longer ourselves.

The question comes to a head when we consider our relations to our "even-Christian," as Julian of Norwich puts it. "Until we put an end to particular attachments," Huxley says in p. 122, "there can be no love of God with the whole heart." Is this true? There is, we remember, a text in the Gospels in which Christ bids us "hate" even our parents as the condition of being his disciples. If Christ ever said this, it is an example of the hyperbolical language which he permitted himself, like other popular preachers, to use without fearing that his words might be misunderstood. A cloistered contemplative might be free from particular attachments; but is this a counsel for persons living in the world? Can we love God without loving our brother also? And do not many of us arrive at the love of God through the purification and intensification of family and conjugal affection? What do we mean by the love of God? For myself, it means homage to the attributes of Love or Goodness, Truth and Beauty, in which the divine nature has been revealed to us, and gratitude for the response to private prayer, of which I have sometimes, less often than I could wish, been conscious. But the kind of

isolation which some of the extreme mystics seem to recommend would be for me a fatal impoverishment of my spiritual life. "Do I wish to know anything except God and myself? Nothing," so Augustine once says. It is not true, unless we expand our notions both of God and self far beyond our customary use of the words. The negative road, if followed exclusively, leads to Nirvana, not to the Christian heaven or the intelligible world of the Platonists. The spiritual life, as lived on earth, must be a double movement of withdrawal and return.

There is one other curious feature in this book which may or may not have a vital connexion with Huxley's philosophy. He has studied psychical research, and believes that "laboratory tests" have established the reality of some beliefs which fifty years ago would have been stigmatized as foolish superstitions. He now believes not only in telepathy but in clairvoyance or second sight, miraculous cures, the power of predicting the future, and even in levitation. Three "mystical phenomena," as they used to be called, are in his opinion on a lower level than spiritual religion, and are therefore, I suppose, irrelevant to the philosophy of mysticism, but on the material and psychical plane he believes them to be real. He speaks as a man of science, and would regard my incredulity as mere obstinacy; but though I try to keep an open mind about telepathy, of which I am still quite unconvinced, I do not believe a word of all the rest. Either Christina Mirabilis and Home, the medium, flew without wings, or they did not. If they did, the law of gravitation is unreliable. If they did not, no doubt seeing is believing, but intelligent people may sometimes see things that are not there. I know of a case when two detectives flew howling from a ghost which was, literally, only moonshine. Crookes was an honest man and a real man of science, but he was not necessarily exempt from hallucinations. He chose as the motto for his coat of arms, *Ubi crux ibi lux*. His friends amended it to Ubi Crookes ibi Spooks.

I think Thomas Huxley would have spoken severely to his grandson.

W. R. Inge.

PHILOSOPHICAL SURVEY

PHILOSOPHY IN ITALY

After an interruption of seven years I take up once again my surveys of Italian philosophy. Many things have happened in the interval, but it is perhaps too soon for them to be susceptible of calm philosophical reflection. The problems that most interest the cultured public to-day are those of existentialism, of historicism and its limits, of German romanticism, and, more generally, of Germanic culture in relation to new spiritual orientations.

The interest in existentialism is due, at least in part, to the fact that it is the philosophy in fashion. But there is in it nevertheless a depth of seriousness that is not overlooked. The tragedies of recent years have placed in the foreground the problems of immediate existence, of human personality and its place in the world, which the preceding idealistic philosophy had too easily absorbed in an impersonal and trans-subjective view of the spirit and its universal values. And, as has often happened in the course of history, there has resulted a reaction of individuality, in its most irrational and vital expressions, against the pretensions of reason to dominate it from above, and imprison it in the net of its concepts.

But if, in this regard, existentialism represents a just demand, which can exercise a beneficial influence on philosophical thought, yet to many its claim to represent a new era in philosophy seems excessive. Its value is only that of an episode. Hence some interpreters of contemporary thought have been drawn to limit the importance of the new movement.[1]

To the historicist conception Croce, who is its most noted representative in Italy, has given the finishing touch with two volumes, which constitute the liveliest and most up-to-date expression of his thought.[2]

In the first of these, on history as thought and as action, in contradiction to the irrationalism and activism of Nazi and Fascist doctrines, he has reaffirmed his own peculiar rationalism, which makes the highest values of the human spirit immanent in history. And in the following work, on the characters of modern philosophy, he has collected some historical-philosophical essays with the intention of demonstrating how some of the principal currents of modern philosophy contribute to the historicist conclusion.

But it has appeared to some that the Hegelian principle of the identity of the rational and the real, which informs Croce's historicism, is too optimistic a formula, and gives rise to a too harmonistic and retrospective view of the real, leaving those rational demands that are the most effective spur to human activity still unsatisfied and at war with empiric reality. The writer of this Survey has constituted himself interpreter of such demands "beyond historicism" in a recent book.[3]

Of late years there have arisen some lively discussions on the philosophy

[1] Of the vast existentialist literature it is sufficient to mention here some of the most significant works: U. Abbagnano, *La struttura dell'esistenza*, Turin 1939; E. Paci, *Pensiero, esistenza e valore*, Milan 1940. On the other side: L. Stefanini, *Il momento dell'educazione*, Padua 1938; G. de Ruggiero, *L'esistenzialismo* (appendix to *Filosofi del novecento*, Bari, 2nd ed., Translated into English with an introduction by Rayner Heppenstall, London, Secker and Warburg, 1946).

[2] B. Croce, *La storia come pensiero e come azione*, Bari 1938, several times reprinted; *Il carattere della filosofia moderna*, Bari, 1942.

[3] G. de Ruggiero, *Il ritorno alla ragione*, Bari, 1946.

of Kant and on the leaders of German romanticism, some participants taking the view that it is to them that is to be attributed the primary responsibility for the Nazi aberrations. Now there are undoubtedly, especially in romanticism, irrational and pathological tendencies that contain in themselves the germs of future degeneration. And in a book by C. Antoni[1] these tendencies are traced to their source in the pre-romantic phase of German thought. But to conclude from this as some Catholic writers have tried to do, that the whole of the great German philosophy ought to be proscribed, is to risk throwing away the baby with the bathwater. A critical revision of the problems of the Kantian philosophy and of romanticism, which tried to avoid the two excesses of unconditional adherence and of equally unconditional repudiation, is contained in the two volumes with which de Ruggiero in recent years has concluded his history of philosophy.[2]

Studies in the history of philosophy in Italy, although impeded by the disorder of the libraries caused by war, have not been wholly interrupted. In addition to the works already mentioned, by Croce, de Ruggiero, and Antoni, an essay on Schelling deserves mention, by Susanna dal Boca, a young student who had already in a preceding volume on Leibniz given proof of great vigour of thought, and who in this second book has been able to bring to a conclusion a profound inquiry into the origin, evolution, and involution of Schelling's thought. Unfortunately, this writer, who was one of the most promising hopes of Italian philosophical history, died prematurely when little over thirty years old.[3]

Finally, among the thinkers who have lately given evidence of originality, I must mention L. Stefanini, who made his first appearance some years before the war with a vast work in two volumes on Plato, and who has recently published some very suggestive writings in which he has tried to temper certain idealistic motives, tinged with contemporary Italian philosophy, with Catholic spiritualism.[4]

The translation of Sir David Ross's book on Aristotle, long postponed on account of the war, has been recently published.[5]

[1] C. Antoni, *La lotta contro la ragione*, Florence, 1942.
[2] G. de Ruggiero, *Da Vico a Kant*, Bari, 1940; *L'età del Romanticismo*, Bari, 1942.
[3] S. dal Boca, *La filosofia di Schelling*, Florence, 1943.
[4] L. Stefanini, *Arte e critica*, Milan, 1945.
[5] W. D. Ross, *Aristotele*, Italian translation, Bari, 1945.

GUIDO DE RUGGIERO.

(Translated from the Italian by Beatrice Allen.)

NEW BOOKS

Realists and Nominalists. By MEYRICK H. CARRÉ, Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Bristol. (Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. vi + 128. Price 8s. 6d. net.)

In his preface Mr. Carré points out the "unhistorical procedure" involved in omitting from a study of the development of philosophy all consideration of the mediaeval period. This unhistorical procedure is indeed less common than it used to be, not only because it is generally recognized that the so-called Fathers of modern philosophy, men like Francis Bacon and Descartes, were, in spite of all claims to novelty, closely linked in some respects to Scholastic thought, but also because the labour expended on research into mediaeval philosophy in recent times has revealed the variety and vigour of mediaeval thought and has placed in a clear light the general pattern and lines of development of that thought. Such a caricature of mediaeval philosophy as that given by so great a thinker as Hegel (dependent, of course, on earlier, and unreliable historians) is scarcely possible to-day. It is, however, true to say, I think, that the work devoted to mediaeval philosophy by British scholars in the universities of this country has been comparatively slight, in spite of the fact that Britain produced several of the most prominent mediaeval thinkers, e.g., Duns Scotus and Ockham, and it is indeed astonishing that no one in this country has hitherto thought it worth while to edit a modern text (let alone a critical edition) of the commentary on the *Sentences* by William of Ockham. It is, then, all the more gratifying to anyone who is interested in mediaeval philosophy to find a lecturer of the University of Bristol publishing a book on certain aspects of that philosophy.

Mr. Carré's book is devoted to the development of the discussion on universals in the Middle Ages (though he does not treat his theme in a narrow and exclusive fashion) and he has chosen to pursue his aim by considering the views of four eminent men, St. Augustine, who, though not, of course, a "mediaeval," exercised a profound influence on mediaeval thought, Peter Abaelard, the great dialectician of the first half of the twelfth century, who dealt a death-blow to ultra-realism, St. Thomas Aquinas, the greatest systematizer of the thirteenth century, and William of Ockham, whose critical thought anticipated the position of philosophers much later in time. Mr. Carré has gone, so far as he was able, to their actual texts, and his book is evidently the fruit of much painstaking work: one admires his courage in undertaking the work, and his book should indeed, as he hopes, "serve some inquirers who wish to reconnoitre the frontiers of a new country." Whether one agrees or not with all the interpretations given by Mr. Carré, he has certainly written a useful and valuable book. He may not convey much new information to specialists, but he does not set out to do so, and in any case specialists in mediaeval philosophy are more or less rare birds in England.

The author has clearly endeavoured to penetrate the thought of the philosophers with whom he deals within its historical context (for example, though incidentally, he realizes that Augustine's theory of the *rationes seminales* is not a statement of specific transformation or modification, but a philosophical answer to a problem of Scriptural exegesis); but I should suggest that he has not made a sufficiently sharp distinction between different types of realism. According to Mr. Carré, Abaelard made a formidable breach in the Platonic and Augustinian citadel of thought, and in a sense this is true;

but the exemplarism of St. Augustine and St. Bonaventure by no means involves the type of ultra-realism which was Abaelard's primary object of attack, i.e., the theory that within the members of a species there is one essence or substance, *numerically* identical in all the members. It is quite possible to maintain the Christian Neo-platonism of Augustine without maintaining the first theory of William of Champeaux, and Abaelard himself, though a determined opponent of the early mediaeval type of ultra-realism, did not deny exemplarism or the Ideas in God. Augustinian exemplarism is certainly not open to a charge of pantheism, whereas Abaelard was only correct in pointing out that early mediaeval ultra-realism led logically to pantheism or monism, since if one is going to assert the existence of a *numerically* identical humanity in all men, corresponding to the universal concept, one should logically go on to assert the existence of a numerically identical substance in all substances or of a numerically identical being in all beings. I do not mean to imply that Mr. Carré does not realize the distinction between Platonic realism, Augustinian realism, and the early mediaeval form of ultra-realism, nor that one could not gather the distinction from his book, but it seems to me that this important point might have been made much clearer than it has been.

A few further criticisms. The use of the word "form" is occasionally ambiguous, since the author sometimes speaks of special forms or special natures, using phrases which would lead one to suppose that he is talking about specific forms, whereas in reality he appears to be speaking of accidental forms. Again, though Aquinas certainly held that in man there is but one specific form, the rational soul, which is the principle of life and sensation as well as of intellection, he certainly did not hold that the mind of man is "an organic composite of mind and body," nor did he hold that the mind "divided from its body ceases to be a mind," though he maintained that the disembodied human soul is not a "person," in his technical use of the term.

Mr. Carré points out in conclusion that the old issues are perpetually being revived in various shapes and guises. Ultra-realism of a sort may be discerned behind the Race-theory, for instance, in which the universal, the race, is made practically the sole subsistent reality, individuals being little more than accidental and unimportant modes. On the other hand, we may add, the maintenance of the rights and value of the individual human personality involves "moderate realism," since, if the concept "man" has no objective reference to an essence realized in each individual, no adequate philosophic reason can be given for anything resembling a "kingdom of ends." Mr. Carré, being no Nominalist, would doubtless agree.

(On p. 60 the last word of the first line of the final paragraph should be "though" instead of "through," while in the final paragraph of p. 81 "effected" would seem to be a misprint for "affected." The *De Potentiis Animae*, attributed on p. 83 to Thomas Aquinas, is rejected as unauthentic by both Mandonnet and Grabmann.) F. C. COPLESTON, S.J.

The Pure Theory of Law. By WILLIAM EBENSTEIN. (The University of Wisconsin Press. Pp. xii + 211. Price $2.50.)

Professor Ebenstein has written the most complete exposition of the Pure Theory of Law, the characteristic product of the Vienna School of Law, of which Kelsen was the chief ornament, which has yet appeared in English. The author is himself an able and enthusiastic member of that school which, as he points out, has caused intellectual storms "from Belgrade to Tokyo," yet he is scarcely correct when he suggests (as he does at the beginning of his

exposition) that the Vienna School has received little attention in the United States or England. On the contrary, the references to it in legal literature are frequent and increasing. All our modern writers on Jurisprudence, and a number in the United States, have paid attention to it, and some have been deeply influenced by Kelsen, perhaps because, as Professor Campbell has pointed out in a recent review of this book (*The Modern Law Review*, April, 1946, pp. 88–92), there are many important points of contact between the Vienna School and the Austinian School of Jurisprudence, more especially in the form in which the Austinian doctrine is presented by Holland. It may also be that there is another, and deeper reason for the present popularity of the Pure Theory of Law. Its most formidable rival is the sociological school, whether in its Continental or in its American form. Sociological jurisprudence implies, however, at least approximate agreement upon the ends of social organization. It means, in the last resort, the elaboration of the writer's own conception of social organization and of social justice. And as these are times of acute sociological cleavage, sociological jurists are apt to reach conclusions varying as widely as those of the naturalists in earlier times. Accordingly, the separation of the form of law from its sociological content, and the apparent certainty of method of the Pure Theory have a strong appeal. To put it another way, the Pure Theory may be applied as easily to legal systems such as those of England or the United States, as to Hitler's Germany or to the Soviet Union.

The legal philosophy of Kant has given birth in modern times to two quite distinct schools of legal philosophy—that of Stammler, with its central conception of a natural law with a varying content, and that of the Vienna School. It is the work rather of Stammler than of Kelsen which has been neglected by Anglo-American jurists, possibly because some of his work is obscure and even more remote from Anglo-American habits of juristic thought than that of Kelsen. It is perhaps too much to hope that some American colleague of Dr. Ebenstein will now do for Stammler what he has done for the Vienna School. It would seem probable that this book will long remain for the ordinary student the necessary introduction to the Pure Theory of Law, as developed in the writings of Kelsen, Verdross, Weyr and others.

One of the main difficulties of Continental legal philosophy, from the Anglo-American standpoint, is its close association with philosophy in general, and its reliance upon philosophical terminology, as compared with the stricter legalism of Anglo-American writers. For this reason, Dr. Ebenstein's first chapter, dealing with the philosophical basis of the Pure Theory is particularly valuable, inasmuch as it helps to bridge the gap for the Anglo-American reader, although even then, it is not altogether easy reading. For example, the following sentence (p. 31) is likely to prove difficult for the English lawyer: "The Pure Theory of Law subscribes to functionalism because that theory asserts, in an advanced form, the Kantian priority of epistemology to ontology; as a theory it represents the 'triumph of pure thought over the substantial object,' which is now no longer treated as having intrinsic qualities but is resolved into the objective validity of logical relations."

Chapter V, dealing with the results of a "Steps-and-Stairs" Theory of Law, founded mainly upon the writings of Merk, is particularly valuable: though a recent reviewer (Dr. Friedmann in *The Law Quarterly Review*, January, 1946, p. 99) has questioned whether in strictness this can be regarded as "pure theory of law" at all.

The Pure Theory of Law represents the most recent and most determined search for certainty in legal thought. Its method is to seek the purely legal norm, stripped of all non-legal material, and to present a picture or rather

an analysis of a legal system as a series of legal norms of descending magnitude, deduced successively from the fundamental norm, or initial hypothesis, which must be assumed or presupposed, since it cannot be enacted. The basic norm is the principle to which all legal phenomena can be attributed and by which they can have their status in law defined; but as has often been noticed, the discovery of this basic norm is an extra-legal process. At this point the Pure Theory must depend upon sociological considerations as the determining factor in the selection between one possible basic norm and another. Once the basic norm has been selected, however, the position of any actual legal rule within a legal system can be deduced with quasi-mathematical precision.

There are some misprints and a few inconsistencies in the text which can no doubt be attributed to the difficulties of war-time publication. There will be an opportunity for removing them when, as is certain, this book goes to a second edition.

G. W. KEETON.

Aesthetic Experience and Its Presuppositions. By MILTON C. NAHM, Bryn Mawr College. (Harper Brothers. Pp. 516 + 35. Price $4.50.)

It is with some misgiving that I try to fulfil my undertaking to review this book, since I am bound to confess that there is much of it I have not understood. This might be my fault or the author's; but a third and more alarming possibility remains. Can the American and British idioms of the English language be so far diverging that a reader of either country would feel less confident of understanding a philosophical book in the other idiom than in, say, French, German, Italian, or Greek?

There are few pages in the book without a sentence which I had to reread at least once; and I was not always successful. Nor was this usually due to the difficulty of the thought. Such a complaint ought to be justified, but, as the sentences in question are usually long, their quotation would be impossible in a review. I will merely give, out of some twenty-five which I have specially noted, two of the shortest and therefore least obscure: "ateleological aesthetic follows a course delineated by the same Plato whose theory of the essence of beauty culminates, once the complex demands of historical speculation are laid upon it, in mysticism" (p. 90), "to the ends of the activity in question no longer pertain the slightest implication of lack of seriousness" (p. 284). Merely verbal surprises are less serious, but symptomatic of the puzzling idiom which I deplore, and more quotable. One of the commonest words in the book is "implicated," which sometimes means "logically implied," sometimes "more or less connected." "Integral" and "integrally" are a constant source of difficulty, e.g. "the discontent integral to aesthetic experience" (p. 178). "Distributively" seems to mean "severally." We meet such phrases as "it shows a similarity of Plato's hypothesis" (p. 222); the words "former" and "latter" sometimes seem to need transposition; we find "inhere to," "rule from," "bifurcation between," "avails his art of," "mutual desires" (= common). Some of these may be slips of the pen or printer's errors (of which an unhappy example certainly occurs in the note on p. 261); I suppose, e.g. that "footless errand" should be "bootless" (p. 277). But, if so, such proof-reading is inconsiderate.

All this detracts lamentably from what should be the value of a book on Aesthetics written with an uncommon combination of learning in the history of the subject and in contemporary psycho-physics. The author's conclusion is that the work of art (for he does not consider natural beauty) is a symbol

of the artist's mood, and, as such, apt to communicate it to others. I think he somewhat underestimates the resemblance of this theory to that of Croce, overlooking that whereas he himself is concerned with the "presuppositions" (biological, anthropological and cultural) of aesthetic experience, Croce is interested solely in that experience itself. Indeed the criticism of Croce is somewhat cursory and confusing, for (on page 94) we are told that "for Croce intuition is the first stage of philosophy of spirit and presupposes but is not presupposed by practical, theoretical and economic activity." Croce and Collingwood, however, are justly criticized for their violence to linguistic usage in calling the artist's intuition "the work of art," a name usually reserved for the medium of communication.

The author is well aware that the destruction of rival theories does not prove his own; but many he does annihilate convincingly, and indeed pronounces such detailed obituaries upon them that his work is an encyclopaedia of aesthetic errors. His general thesis of the nature of works of art is to me acceptable, but his suggestion that such works have their ultimate value as encouraging us to action and his account of the biological and cultural origin of certain symbols are not convincing. There is pessimistic art which is good but not encouraging. I enjoy the play *Hamlet*, but I never regarded the man as a "leader" (the biological herd-symbol). If light were for all western civilization a cultural (not artificial) symbol of immortality I should expect Satan to be radiant.

I have not attempted to conceal my regret that the writer of a book so potentially valuable should not have maintained the clear and concise style of which he shows himself capable, as at the top of page 76, at the bottom of page 116, and the top of page 158, each of which adequately states what has been very obscurely elaborated in some scores of preceding pages.

E. F. Carritt.

The Classical Republicans. An Essay in the recovery of a pattern of thought in seventeenth-century England. By Zera S. Fink. (North-western University, Evanston, U.S.A. 1945. Pp. xi + 225.)

Men of the Renaissance imitated the ancients in many areas of literature and art. They were especially fond of reaffirming the political notions of Plato and Aristotle, of Polybius and Cicero. In seventeenth-century England the admiration for the practice and theory of the ancient commonwealths promoted the belief in the virtues of republicanism, and this scholarly influence lent force to the contest with the monarchy. Professor Fink describes the views of a number of writers who drew upon Greek and Roman models in the course of advocating schemes of mixed government. Some of these writers proposed that the monarchy should be abolished. A further brilliant example of republican rule was presented by the constitution of Venice, and many eulogies of the Most Serene Republic were published. The parallel that was frequently cited between the Venetian system and the government of ancient Rome recommended the system to English thinkers. The sentiments of Machiavelli, whose *Discourses* were translated in 1636, also infused republican ideas. The *Discourses* owed much to Polybius.

Classical influences entered deeply into the elaborate structure of Harrington's *Oceana*. Professor Fink rightly distinguishes the fundamental place occupied by law in the intricate plan of *Oceana*; and he points out that here Harrington appealed to the practice of the ancients. The central figure in *The Classical Republicans* is, however, Milton. The mind of the grand prophet was steeped in classical precedents, and from the early pamphlets against

episcopacy to *The ready and easy way* of 1660 he summoned ancient parallels at every point to enforce his argument. Professor Fink affirms that through all the changes of his political outlook he was constant to the beliefs that mixed governments are best and that an aristocracy of wisdom should dominate the State. It is well to discern the continuity of principles in the political pamphlets. But Professor Fink's concern for the classical features in Milton's opinions does not allow him, I feel, to notice sufficiently the historical circumstances that produced a striking revolution in the poet's attitude towards the popular element in government. The disillusionment had little to do with the view that the fall of the Roman republic sprang from plebeian encroachments. And the perpetual grand council proposed in *The ready and easy way* has very slender connection with popular sovereignty. It must be added that the author presents an admirable survey of Milton's political ideas, within the limits which he sets himself.

Classical republicanism did not die with the Restoration. Henry Nevil's *Plato redivivus* and Algernon Sydney's *Discourses concerning government* proclaim its continuing spirit. Of these writers and of others, not omitting Disraeli, the author of this excellent contribution to the history of ideas gives good accounts. M. H. Carré.

Preface to an American Philosophy of Art. By A. Philip McMahon. (University of Chicago Press. Pp. 179 text, 180–194 notes and index.)

This is a difficult book. Words are defined in unusual senses, the style is nebulous and the arrangement is discursive. The introduction (pp. 1–12) offers an apology for the title, certainly necessary but not very acceptable. There follows (pp. 13–102) an attack on idealist philosophy, of which idealist aesthetics are said to be rather the basis than the result. But the criticism of idealism most emphasised is that it is not American, is even un-American, "undemocratic," and in fact comes from Germany, to which it is said to be "appropriate," a country recently defeated in a war against the United States who are now "a major power." "A philosophy of art worthy of Americans should not impugn the normal impulses of a rational human, and therefore social being." To be "consistent with American traditions" is therefore "a distinction rather than a limitation." "There exists no moral obligation or political demand that would compel Americans to accept an illogical theory of art."

The criticism of idealist philosophies begins with Descartes and ends with Hitler. Hegel and Croce and Collingwood are not discussed. This is followed by a more tolerant account of the "Classical Explanations of Art" (pp. 102–49), which "have a direct relation to basic American insight" in their "moral idealism and intellectual naturalism."

In the last thirty pages we come to "Contributions to an American Philosophy of Art." Art is strongly distinguished from "aesthetics" which is used to mean beauty. "A work of art presents an organized pattern of sensory data and it is a product of technique. The senses for which such an object offers occasions of ordered experience are chiefly those of vision, touch, equilibrium, and direction. The way in which these data are composed as matter of a form secures for them, as a rule, a high degree of temporal persistence." Music and poetry are excluded from "art" on the ground that their products are physically transient and that when we go to an "art-museum" or "art-school" we do not expect to meet them. No more concrete examples are given of art than "Greek sculpture and architecture," but it seems that the arts of plumbing and drainage must be included. The ex-

cellence of such products is (*a*) "logical," i.e. the degree of "order" introduced into the "data," (*b*) "ethical," i.e. their subservience to human welfare, (*c*) historical, i.e. their record of the "beliefs by which their makers lived," (*d*) "aesthetic," i.e. "affection" or "enjoyment" in the widest sense. The last is neither peculiar nor indispensable to works of art. Yet if asked in what the excellence of the *Primavera* or a Chardin or a Vermeer consists, I cannot help thinking we should only name its aesthetic qualities.

Finally, I confess that I never discovered the spiritual homogeneity claimed by the author for Americans. Perhaps because I only spent a year in the U.S.A.

E. F. Carritt.

The Adventure of Youth. By Olive A. Wheeler, D.Sc. (University of London Press, 1945. x + 212. Price 6s.)

It is regrettable that philosophers, speaking generally, no longer concern themselves with educational problems, but prefer to leave this field to the "educationists." In so doing they neglect the precept and shining example of Plato who thought such problems very much their concern. Certainly in this period of great educational changes when what we do now must deeply influence the life of tomorrow, it seems to be the philosopher's especial duty to ponder upon the proposed changes and to comment on them.

The work here under review provides an excellent introduction to educational problems; it is a compact, well-balanced examination of the whole field of education at the present moment as it applies to adolescence. The author's wide acquaintance with the practice of education and her long study of its theory make her a very competent guide. Her discussions of the various difficulties which now meet teacher and administrator are very effective and very persuasive.

One of the author's fundamental convictions is that education must be child-centred. Unless this principle is borne in mind education can very easily become exploitation—exploitation of the child in the interest of industry in the case of the so-called vocational training of trade schools; exploitation in the interest of party, a social class or a political party; exploitation in the interest of a religious sect; or even, finally, exploitation in the interest of selfish parents. In all these cases education fails in its purpose. Its true purpose is to prepare each individual child for as full and as abundant a life as it is possible for him or her to live.

Education must be child-centred in another sense; it must take into account the whole child and *all* his needs. It cannot, therefore, confine itself to book-culture, nor to intellectual training in the ordinary sense. It cannot neglect a training in skills, technical training in a non-vocational sense, and again a training of the emotional life and of the moral life. Moreover, the child is not isolated. He is growing up in a society which on the one hand provides him with a rich inheritance and, on the other, demands much from him. He has to be trained to value his inheritance and to meet the social demands.

The period under consideration in this book is adolescence, that is roughly 13 to 17. The author thinks it a period of "four major life-adjustments." Dependence on parents ceases, obedience to parents ceases to be the criterion of morality and "a morality of co-operation," the author thinks, comes in its stead. The youth begins to feel independent and this is associated with the first great adjustment—the finding of a vocation. Secondly, there is a new adjustment to the other sex, for a mate has to be found. "Thirdly, there are new social emotions, preparing the individual to assume the responsibilities of citizenship. Then there are also new or intensified aesthetic and religious

emotions, the prelude to the fourth great adjustment—the finding by the individual of a religion, a moral code or a working philosophy of life." (p. 142).

In some form or other every boy or girl has to meet the challenge of these four adjustments, but the response is different because the children vary. They vary in intellectual endowment, in special aptitudes and in temperament. And there must be provision for these variations. Accordingly Professor Wheeler proposes a course in which due attention would be given to a basic curriculum which all children should follow, whilst also many alternative courses would be provided, only some of which would be taken by any one child, according to its interest and aptitude. She even ventures to list the items in the basic curriculum: (*a*) health education, (*b*) training in thinking and in the clear expression of thought (*c*) guidance in choosing a job, (*d*) social training, (*e*) appreciation of art, (*f*) moral and religious training.

I have no space in which to follow the details of the various chapters. I should have wished to discuss in particular the argument of the fourth, dealing with the main lines of development during adolescence, the seventh, dealing with juvenile delinquency, the ninth with co-education, boarding schools, examinations, and so on, the eleventh concerning the curriculum, and lastly the fourteenth, with its very wise treatment, as I think, of the difficult question of religious education.

I shall confine myself instead to one or two general remarks. First, I wish the author had given greater attention to the problem of rural education and to the whole matter of the relation between urban and rural schools. Secondly, she has brought out a point which is undoubtedly very true, namely, that the educational ideal in a secondary school is very different from that, say, in a university. Especially now that secondary schooling is for all and not for the few who would in many cases go on to the university, the end of the one is not the end of the other. It is admittedly very difficult to say what the end of university life at present is, but the philosophy of education which lies behind it still sets as its ideal the pure love of learning and the disciplined, and frequently arduous, search for knowledge. Now this cannot and ought not to be the ideal in the secondary school. Professor Wheeler is surely right when she sets before us a philosophy of secondary school education which is inspired by another ideal, namely, preparation for life. Consequently the angle of approach must be different. The only comment I would make here is that even at the secondary school level, the love of learning for its own sake should still be a subsidiary ideal. This will help to save us from schools which concentrate on "social" and "useful" subjects and which completely neglect genuine mental discipline. Professor Wheeler, of course, understands this need, as the second item in her proposed basic curriculum makes clear. But less competent exponents of the new philosophy of secondary school training may and do neglect it with disastrous results.

The last point I wish to make is that Professor Wheeler demands almost too much from the teacher in one respect. It is good to see her emphasis on the importance of the teacher, and on the high seriousness of his calling. But I wonder whether we can expect of each teacher "a direct insight into the meaning of life" (p. 207). There must be very few who have this direct insight. What of the rest of us? Are we to be excluded from the great profession of teaching?

I can heartily recommend this book to the attention of philosophers.

R. I. Aaron.

A Sketch of Mediaeval Philosophy. By D. J. B. Hawkins. (London: Sheed and Ward. 1946. Pp. 148. Price 6s.)

The author of this little work has performed a notable feat. He has surveyed the vast career of mediaeval philosophy from Boethius to the renaissance in 130 pages and has contrived with admirable skill to present a lively sense of the leading doctrines and movements. A glance at the course of the narrative will indicate the measure of his achievement. He considers first the sources and aims of scholastic thought, referring to several positions assumed by philosophy in relation to theology in the Middle Ages, positions that were considerably more varied than some people suppose. The work of Boethius is next described. There follows a chapter on the systems of Erigena and of Anselm. In the third chapter the rise of the controversy over universals and the theory of Abelard are related; and a section is given to the teaching of the universities. The next chapter is crowded with the story of the recovery of Aristotle through the Arabs and the Jews. The tale now passes to the high period of mediaeval philosophy and reviews in successive chapters the work of St. Bonaventura, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Duns Scotus. The chapter on Aquinas is naturally longer than the others and presents the most difficulties to an innocent reader. Mr. Hawkins manages even to include accounts of the ethical and political views of the Angelic doctor. Chapter VIII treats of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and includes a valuable reference to the empiricism of Durandus. It passes on to the terminism of Ockham; after which the narrative, for the first time, tends to become a catalogue of names. The final chapter describes the sterile repetitions of later scholasticism and its fatal divorce from the new philosophy. There is a useful bibliography.

An historical sketch must expect the querulous chant with which an anthology of poetry is inevitably received, that it leaves out this or that favourite passage. I will not waste words on any compliant of this nature over Mr. Hawkins's sketch; on the contrary, I think it is wonderful to see how much he has worked in of the essential development of mediaeval reflection without threatening the inexpert reader with indigestion or giddiness. Whether he is writing a paragraph on Averroes or on the exemplarism of Bonaventura or on the Five Ways of St. Thomas, Mr. Hawkins penetrates with the easy lucidity of a master of his subject to the main issue. Pedantry will demand a change of emphasis here and there, or request a little clarification at one point or another. And since in a review pedantry must be allowed a fling I will add a few questions that have arisen in the course of the pleasant reading of the book.

Can the later Averroists and the Ockhamists all be fairly described as rationalists in the modern sense of the term (p. 14)? Many of the fourteenth-century Ockhamists advocated fideism. Is it not a little disproportionate to lay such weight on the ontological argument of the *Proslogion* to the exclusion of the reasoning of the *Dialogue on Truth* and of the *Monologion* (p. 29)? Anselm's argument in the *Proslogion* requires to be understood in the light of the Augustinian perspective developed in the earlier works, especially in the light of the doctrine of the relation of necessary truths to being. In describing the philosophy of St. Thomas would it not be better to begin with the metaphysical principles rather than with the theory of knowledge (p. 77)? The doctrine that knowledge and being are correlative rests upon the metaphysical principles. The account of Thomist knowledge on p. 79–80 might, I feel, mislead the student, especially the reference to *principia per se nota*. The important consideration is "*habitus ille principiorum est acceptus a sensibilibus*." Scotus's teaching on *ratio formalis* (p. 104) remains to the present reviewer obscure, even after Mr. Hawkins has explained it.

But instead of pursuing these queries I would like to quote many delightful utterances that enliven the pages of this book. I must confine myself to proclaiming that I think it is the best brief survey of mediaeval philosophy in the English tongue.

M. H. Carré.

States and Morals. By T. D. Weldon. (London: John Murray, 1946. Pp. xi + 302. Price 9s.)

This is a useful and timely book. Nothing has been written in English since Bosanquet's work in 1899 which deals with the philosophical issues in politics with the same sense of the importance of theory and of its relevance to fact.

Mr. Weldon first divides theories of the State into "Organism" and "Machine" theories. The Organism theory makes the State fundamental and men its instruments; the Machine theory makes men fundamental and the State their instrument. The Machine view is subdivided into the Force theory and the Democratic (or Consent) theory. The former name is misleading since all States exercise force. The essential difference depends on whether the force is used "as the means whereby a comparatively small number of people impose their will on a more or less reluctant majority" (p. 98) or whether the force expresses the will of the majority. Mr. Weldon then goes on to exhibit the political philosophies of the classic European authorities as examples of one or other of these views. He concludes from this examination that any one of the three "definitions" of the State can be logically worked out with complete consistency. Therefore none is *theoretically* superior to any other. So far, political theories are like geometries, Euclidean and non-Euclidean. Each is internally self-consistent, and consists of the working out of the implications of one or more postulates. The next step is that of application. Which definition best describes actual States? In putting the issues in this order and in his actual arguments from this point onwards, Mr. Weldon is breaking new ground, though observers at Yalta, San Francisco, Paris, and New York may well feel that only some such theory as his can explain the present international *impasse*.

He maintains that none of the three definitions fits all actual States. No actual State now exemplifies the Force theory (and perhaps none ever did). Actual States do exemplify both the Organic and the Consent theories. But these theories are incompatible with each other. Thus there can be no one political philosophy. Why is there this dead-end? It is because the Organic and the Consent theory rest on two incompatible *moral* beliefs about the value of the individual. Any basic political theory is ultimately a moral theory. But since the opposition is between two moral views, it is useless for the upholders of the two views to argue with each other. No man ever changed his basic moral beliefs as a result of argument. Nor is it sensible for one group to regard the behaviour of the other as immoral or wicked. Both groups are moral but have different moralities. We should feel towards Russian or German State-worshippers as we feel towards Quaker conscientious objectors. Nor is it wise to try to impose a form of State on men who hold the moral beliefs appropriate to the opposite form, or even on men who have not yet clearly recognized the moral code appropriate to the form in question.

Finally, Mr. Weldon maintains that moral values are relative and that all conflicts between basic moral beliefs are insoluble. Just as there is no one political theory which fits all the facts, so there is no one political theory which is "right" or "ideal." We, in democratic countries, must get on as best we can with Organic States (their citizens and governments). We must not

abuse or upbraid them. We must not try to alter them or even hope to convert them. For such a hope would imply that we were right and they were wrong. An upholder of the democratic theory is doubly debarred from "exporting" his form of government, because this interference with the moral standards, the free choice, and the self-determination of the citizens of other States is contrary not only to the relativity of moral values but also to his own moral standards of freedom and self-determination. Recognition of this final *impasse*, Mr. Weldon thinks, would make for toleration, would diminish senseless recrimination and the attempt to foment revolutions in other lands, and would promote understanding in international relations. It also shows just why world-states (or federations including "organic" and "democratic" member-states) are forever impossible.

In this analysis, the Force theory is given short shrift. But it might be shorter still. If political theories are to rest on moral foundations, the Force theory since it is a-moral is ruled out of court. No actual State exemplifies it; and in my view, the two authorities quoted as upholding it would be able to complain. Hobbes seems clearly to hold a Machine view. The State exists to guarantee security to individuals. Accepting his Machine hypothesis we might well argue against him that the powers he gives his Sovereign (monarch or assembly), including the power of determining its own successor, are much greater than is necessary. To speak of the "Marxist State" as a Force State is of course literally accurate since Marx did say the State was the means by which the masses were exploited by the few. But it is misleading, since Marx held that the necessary controls should be exercised by an association of producers' organizations and such an association would be in a much truer sense "the Marxist State."

There seem also to be dangers in calling the other species of the Machine theory "Consent" or "Democracy." The Force theory treats the State as the exploitation of some citizens in the interest of others. The alternative to it should be the theory which regards the State as force exercised for the benefit of all individual citizens without distinction. Democracy may be the best means to this end, but it is not an infallible means. The exploitation of a minority by a majority would be a Force phenomenon. Democracy is subdivided by Mr. Weldon into Radical Democracy (such as that of the U.S.A.), which rests on abstract human rights, equality, and law, and Individual Democracy which recognizes and fosters differences in human individuality (the tendency in Great Britain). This again seems to me less fundamental than the differences of interpretation of "the benefit of all individual citizens" which mark off the major split in democracies to-day. Some States recognize liberty (liberties, or private enterprise, or voluntary co-operation, or choice of profession, or freedom of conscience, or freedom of speech) as one of the most important ends which Government should promote (though of course such "promotion" would have to be mainly negative and to appear as protection or respect or guarantees). Other States concentrate on such "benefits" as housing, health, education, comfort, social security (where of course "promotion" can take very positive forms) at the expense of liberty wherever this seems required.

Mr. Weldon's view that fundamental political conflicts are moral conflicts seems convincing and his corollaries concerning tolerance and the export of political systems sound. But there should be less ready agreement with the view that moral standards are wholly relative and that therefore there is nothing to choose, morally or philosophically, between the Organic and the Machine theory. He himself makes several solid points against the Organic theory, and many of them would be felt even by citizens

of Organic States. Does any citizen of an Organic State really believe that morality is exhausted by what the State commands? Nor does he really believe that he is not only entitled but morally obliged to treat non-members of his State as mere tools, with complete disregard of their interests. The Organic theory requires both conclusions. It also requires inequality to the extent of sacrificing ruthlessly whole classes of individuals within the State; Mr. Weldon even suggests at one place that it requires slavery (p. 74). Perhaps some of the more fanatical controllers of Organic States may have said such things and even acted as if they believed them. But it is difficult to feel convinced that our contrary view is a mere consequence of our democratic traditions. For even Germans were ashamed of Belsen and of the pogroms of 1938. On the Organic view their shame would be both unjustified and inexplicable. Moreover the Organic view, so far as it rests on a moral conviction concerning the relation of individual to group, does not lead to *State* supremacy but might equally lead to Church or Trade Union supremacy. These bodies, as Rousseau saw, have "general wills" in relation to their members. To achieve or justify State supremacy, the Organic theory must either, like Rousseau, destroy the other associations (i.e. adopt the Force theory) or plead (like Aristotle with his theory of self-sufficiency) that the State is a better instrument for satisfying individual needs than they are (i.e. adopt the Machine theory).

A final difficulty is that the Organic theory cannot be worked out coherently. Its basic concept, "national interest," can be analysed or illustrated or applied only in terms of individual interests. Those Germans were wise who decried reason and philosophy. The Organic theory can retain its distinctness and its vigour only for those who refuse to think. It is in fact, like primitive animism, a superstition (though a very natural superstition).

The value of Mr. Weldon's book, especially for students and non-professional philosophers, is little affected even if these criticisms are well-founded. Such a book should convince the reader that its problems are real and important; it should stimulate him to think about them and provide him with a clear and ordered set of arguments and issues to consider. All this Mr. Weldon has done.

J. D. Mabbott.

Time, Knowledge and the Nebulae. Martin Johnson. (Faber & Faber Ltd. 1946. Pp. 189. Price 12/6.)

This book deals with the nature of time and of scientific knowledge from the point of view called by Dingle "Modern Aristotelianism," E. A. Milne's kinematical relativity being expounded and defended. It is important firstly because E. A. Milne in a foreword gives it his blessing so that it must be accounted a serious contribution to the theory, and secondly because it is the first account of kinematical relativity written by a physicist. Before, however, philosophical deductions are drawn from a theory of mathematical physics it is first necessary to look at it closely as mathematical physics. This we shall attempt to do and we shall have occasion to point out that much of the argument of the book turns on the vagueness with which the terms used are defined and on the, apparently unconscious, introduction of arbitrary assumptions into the mathematical structure.

The Introduction and Part I are mainly philosophical in character and are written in such a highly allusive manner that they may be fairly said to contain more assertions than reasoned arguments. But three clear-cut points do emerge: Firstly it is suggested that the unquestioning identification of the

time-variables of atomic and of macroscopic physics may be illegitimate. Secondly causal laws must be replaced by "functional dependance" which "means that the physical behaviour is found to be describable by a set of variables, the magnitudes of which under given conditions are relatable to one another by mathematical form: manipulation of this form therefore permits, if certain of the variables move over a range discovered by observation, that certain others may be inferred to have definite magnitudes." The first of these points is a pertinent speculation, the second is an admirable basis for all mathematical physics. But the third point, which is the cornerstone of Johnson's treatment, is of much more doubtful value. It concerns the communicability of knowledge: laws must be expressed in such a manner that one observer can communicate them to another. So far so good, but it is next claimed that a necessary condition for communicability is that the signals sent between observers in transmitting scientific knowledge must have a constant velocity. This, it is alleged, is an epistemological requirement though a moment's reflection will show that such is not the case. I daily communicate scientific knowledge to my students using as my signal a sound wave which travels with a variable velocity depending on the temperature of the air in the room and on the prevailing air currents in it. Or I may use a letter as my signal which travels with speeds varying from zero to, say, sixty miles an hour during its journey. The only case in which, in fact, knowledge is never communicated is between the ideal Lorentz observers considered by Johnson who signal to one another by means of light which travels with a constant velocity. In other words Johnson is arbitrarily assuming that a constant velocity of signal is required for communicability and restricting the term "scientific knowledge" to mean the information which could be so communicated.

In the first chapter of Part II we have an excellent account of the mathematical derivation of the Lorentz transformations of special relativity and of their applications in electromagnetics. But here again we find an unconscious preliminary assumption coming into play. Johnson has earlier defined coordinates but there is nothing in the definition which compels him to combine them according to Pythagoras' theorem as he now proceeds to do. His x and y might just as well be latitude and longitude on the earth's surface in which case the combination $x^2 + y^2$ has no invariant meaning. The arbitrary assumption that space is Euclidean has crept in unawares. In Einstein's treatment this assumption, together with that of the constant velocity of light, are working hypotheses and no more. Still more important is Johnson's omission to mention Einstein's assumption that *for each observer* spatial and temporal measurements are the results of independent operations. Yet it is precisely this feature that constitutes the difference between special and kinematical relativity.

The next chapter contains an account of general relativity which does not bear out the promise of its predecessor. What indeed is to be thought of a treatment which omits all reference to the cardinal feature of the theory, the element which distinguishes it from all other theories using a space-time representation of events—Einstein's gravitational equations? In his discussion of the expanding universes, Johnson dismisses the work of the last twenty years as "misspent ink" and reverts to a chapter of the "Mathematical Theory of Relativity" written by Eddington in 1924 at a time when he, in common with other relativists, had not considered the possibility of a "non-statical" space-time. When speaking of the "curvature of space," Johnson shows that he is confusing the common-sense meaning of the term "curvature" as "amount of bending" with its technical meaning in Riemannian geometry where it is

merely another name for the Riemann-Christoffel tensor. He has himself provided the escape from the resulting paradoxes through the notion of "functional dependance." The so-called "curvature of space" is that mathematical function which expresses the dependance of the average pressure and density, velocity and acceleration of matter in the model universes, on the time and therefore on one another. Moreover Johnson seems to believe that different *theories* are required to construct the Einstein, de Sitter, Eddington and other model universes. All these are special sub-cases of a particular case of *one* theory—general relativity. The particular case arises from the working hypothesis that the system of the nebulae can be regarded as spatially homogeneous and the sub-cases correspond to different time-dependances of the velocity and acceleration of matter and to different initial conditions in its distribution, compatible with the homogeneity requirement. An analogy may make Johnson's standpoint clearer. He is in the position of a writer on Newtonian planetary theory who, in the first place, never mentions the inverse square law of gravitation but discusses only the "curvatures" of the possible elliptical, parabolic, etc., orbits, and who, in the second place, thinks that a separate *theory* is needed in each case to show that the path may be an ellipse or a parabola or a hyperbola.

After this melancholy display, the persevering reader passes on to an excellent account of Milne's theory of equivalent observers and of his remarkable theorem in pure mathematics that the Lorentz transformation between coordinates is independent of the particular method of assigning coordinates used in special relativity. Firstly, time-variables need not represent a physically measureable time but simply a time consisting of an enumerable set of instants. Secondly distance-variables are not independent of this "enumerable time" but are assigned as follows: Let an observer A send out a light-signal to another observer B at the instant t_0, in A's enumeration let it be reflected by B and return to A at the instant t. Then A says that B's distance is $r=\frac{1}{2}c(t - t_0)$ where c is a constant conventionally agreed to between A and B. All this is unimpeachable pure mathematics: the difficulties begin when it is regarded as mathematical physics, little mention of which will be found in Johnson's book. There is firstly the crucial requirement that observers can regraduate their clocks, i.e. choose a new enumeration of instants related by some mathematical function to the old. As Johnson shows, this means that two or more equivalent observers can regard themselves either as at mutual rest (the dynamic time-scale) or as in mutual relative motion (the kinematic time-scale) according to the rate at which their synchronised clocks work. There is however nothing in the definition of equivalent observers (pp. 85-86) which prevents me from regarding myself and the driver of an approaching bus in whose path I stand, as equivalent. Hence by agreement with the driver we can make our watches go at a rate which makes the distance between me and the bus a constant and saves me from being run over. No kinematical relativist has (prudently) carried out this experimental verification of the theory: it is merely arbitrarily asserted that the bus-driver and I are not equivalent observers.

More serious still is the fact that in astronomy the displacement of spectral lines in the light emitted by luminous bodies and called a Doppler shift is a very common phenomenon. Portions of the solar surface, stars of our Galaxy, as well as the nebulae exhibit it. All these manifestations of the phenomenon can be correlated on the basis of the concept of relative velocity "in the line of sight" provided that relative velocity cannot be transformed away by time or space transformations. The expanding universes constitute the particular application of the concept to the nebular system. But in Milne's theory only Doppler shifts exhibited by the nebulae are considered and relative velocity

has no meaning. By a suitable choice of time-scale the observers on all the nebulae can regard themselves as mutually at rest. When such a scale is in use, the Doppler shifts observed become inexplicable and a new "principle of nature" has to be invoked to account for them. It is that radiation frequencies and the energy of an atom are constant on the kinematic time-scale. Such a notion might well be thought to require much supporting argument: Johnson merely states (p. 108) that "there seems reason to believe" in it. Its effect is to dissociate the Doppler shifts exhibited by the nebulae from all others.

Secondly, there are the mutually contradictory mental characteristics which must be attributed to the observers themselves. On page 122 they are "mere recorders of the reception and despatch of signals," elsewhere they are "not human beings" and "automata." Yet on page 85 they are found to be familiar with graphical methods, with the idea of a mathematical function and with the methods of manipulating such functions. They are so lacking in scientific curiosity that they never construct two clocks working at different rates—the equivalent of the regraduation of one clock—to find out if their description of nature is altered according as they look at one clock or the other. Yet they are technicians so transcending human engineers that they can despatch signals to, and receive them from, the Andromeda nebula. Can it be that kinematical relativity is, after all, science as it would appear to these strange creatures and not as it appears to a being with the mental equipment of man?

The last chapters of the book are philosophical in character and reviews in a brief and allusive manner the ideas on time of Bergson, Ward, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, Russell, Kant, Whitehead, Broad, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, McTaggart and Plato, all in thirty pages. In conclusion, there are two appendices one of which is devoted to Milne's acceleration formula which is called "gravitational" though it can only be reconciled with the ordinary meaning of this term by asserting that the constant of gravitation is, in fact, a variable with time. Application of the formula to the motion of Mercury does not account for the motion of the perihelion any more than did the Newtonian theory. Johnson however follows Milne in suggesting that it should be applied to the elucidation of the shapes of the spiral arms of nebulae though no verification by an appeal to observation is forthcoming.

In thus criticizing kinematical relativity, we do not wish to suggest that Milne's *method* is illegitimate in mathematical physics. Newtonian mechanics, Dirac's theory of the electron, general relativity all start in the same way as does Milne, by laying down certain initial postulates and developing their mathematical consequences. Where Milne's theory diverges from the others is that, when these consequences are found to be contrary to experience and observation, the initial postulates are not abandoned or re-formulated. Let us in conclusion answer Milne's *cri de cœur* in the foreword where he says "that the structure he (Johnson) describes is substantially free from errors of argument I am convinced. But physicists seem to demand something more." Undoubtedly they do, and what they ask for is that the deductions from a theory should neither be in flat contradiction with experience nor that they should require the importation of ad hoc hypotheses to account for phenomena already adequately incorporated into the scientific scheme. G. C. McVittie.

Berkeley's Immaterialism. By A. A. Luce, M.C., D.D., Litt.D. (Thomas Nelson & Sons, Ltd. Price 6s.)

Professor Luce, already well known for his writings on Berkeley, holds the chair of Moral Philosophy at Trinity College, Dublin, where Berkeley was

a fellow. As he writes he looks out on the same Dublin mountains on which Berkeley looked, and with the same conviction of their sensible reality. This book is no mere pious exercise in cool and critical evaluation of a distinguished predecessor, like Professor Broad's *Examination of McTaggart's Philosophy*. It is the work of a convinced disciple, presenting and defending the teaching of his master to a generation misled by many misinterpretations of it; but living at a time when the conception of material substance is already wearing thin and the trend of thought in physics, in literary and aesthetic criticism, and to a lesser degree in Christian Theology, portend its final disappearance and the acceptance of Berkeley's immaterialism.

In philosophy itself, Professor Luce thinks, the signs are less clear. Philosophers, and particularly professors, are represented as confining themselves for the most part to "silent sympathy" with immaterialism, oppressed by a natural fear of being misunderstood by their scientific colleagues (p. 159). Professor Luce, we feel, is setting them a stirring example of outspokenness, an Irishman's challenge to English indecision and compromise, and to Scottish caution.

The sub-title of the work is "A commentary on his (sc. Berkeley's) 'A Treatise concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge.'" The author contends that that work contains a full and complete statement of Berkeley's case for immaterialism, and presents a view which Berkeley never modified. It appears also to be the author's conviction that this view is free from any inconsistencies, and that the arguments are all sound and together make up a complete and unanswerable case. Few philosophers are likely to agree with this. It is a large claim to make on behalf of any philosopher, however great, original and perspicacious, who was not also divinely inspired.

The Introduction gives a short sketch of Berkeley's life, designed to dissipate misconceptions of the man; Chapter 1 deals with misinterpretations of his doctrine. The Introduction aims at presenting him as "a normal man of flesh and blood in constant and fruitful touch with the real world," describes his diplomatic work and his attempt to found a college in America, and discusses the order and mutual relations of his philosophical writings. "The false Berkeley . . . of legend and textbook tradition, . . . the long-haired and languishing visionary . . . " is unrecognisable in this short biography.

In Chapter 1 the author maintains that Berkeley was not (*a*) a Christian Scientist, (*b*) an acosmist, (*c*) a pantheist, (*d*) a pampsychist, (*e*) an idealist. The last two are the commonest and, though most excusable, according to Professor Luce, the most misleading misinterpretations. A pampsychist, Professor Luce tells us, is one who believes that nothing exists except mind. But Berkeley maintained a "dualistic immaterialism," maintaining that two sorts of objects exist in the full and proper sense (or senses) of the word "exist"; minds and ideas. Ideas are not, according to Berkeley, what Descartes thought they were, mere modes of the existence of mind, though Berkeley did perhaps begin by thinking of them as such, as indicated by the passage from a private notebook, quoted by Professor Luce on page 23, which he admits to be pampsychist:

> "Nothing properly but persons, i.e. conscious things, do exist, all other things are not so much existences as manners of ye existence of persons."

Professor Luce's point could perhaps be put by saying that Berkeley's final view was that minds are the only substances, but not that only substances exist.

Conversely, an idealist should be a person who believes that "all is idea" (p. 26). But Berkeley maintained that both ideas and spirits exist, and most

emphatically that spirits are not ideas. Kant, we are reminded, was probably the first to label, or libel, Berkeley as an idealist in his *Refutation of Idealism* where the account he gives of Berkeley's view, of which Professor Luce quotes a sentence, is, according to him, "not even a burlesque" and "must have been derived from hearsay" (p. 26). More important and less dubious is the contention that Berkeley was not "the father of modern idealism." Modern idealists "distrust the senses and exaggerate the powers of the human mind"; they "regard man's mind as determinant of knowledge, constitutive of reality, imposing its forms and categories, like creative spirit moving on the formless deep." "There is nothing of all that in Berkeley." We must grant to Professor Luce that Kant was wrong in saying that Berkeley held that "objects in space are mere products of the imagination," and that Berkeley differs from modern idealists in regarding the Divine mind and finite minds as distinct existences, and the object known as having an existence independent of our knowing it. But if anyone chooses to call Berkeley an "idealist," meaning thereby that Berkeley believed that nothing exists except minds and their ideas, I do not see why he should not do so, providing he gives notice of his meaning.

The body of the work consists of an exposition of the arguments of the "Principles," including the "Objections and Replies," in the order in which they were written, doing full justice, perhaps sometimes more than justice, to the "tactics" and "dramatics" of the book. The exposition is for the most part just and inspiring. I shall comment only on those portions of it with which I am not in full agreement.

My first and greatest quarrel with Professor Luce is that I do not share his complete satisfaction with Berkeley's account of the existence of material things when not perceived by any finite spirit. It seems to me that Berkeley is not consistent in his views, and that Professor Luce does not face this inconsistency. In Section III of the "Principles," Berkeley says of his table, "If I were out of my study I should say it existed, meaning thereby that if I was in my study I might perceive it, or that some other spirit actually does perceive it." It's existence, as Professor Luce says on page 64, is perceived existence or perceivable existence. Tables do not cease to exist when not perceived. Their existence consists in the fact that they are perceptible. The same view is put forward in Section LVIII on the reality of the unperceived motion of the earth. But in Section VI Berkeley says "so long as they (sc. the choir of heaven and furniture of the earth) are not actually perceived by me, or do not exist in my mind or that of any other created spirit, they must either have no existence at all, or else subsist in the mind of some eternal spirit." But if existence, as he has said, can mean perceptibility, this simply does not follow; so long as they are in principle perceptible (like the motion of the earth) they "exist," and there is no need to suppose the Eternal Spirit to save them from non-existence. Neither in his treatment of these two passages in Chapters 5 and 6, nor in his treatment of the objection from perpetual annihilation and creation in Chapter 2, do I find Professor Luce resolving this inconsistency. There is much vague and inspiring talk about "climbing with Berkeley to the heights," "taking a bird's-eye view of the perceptual situation as a whole," "passing in thought from my microcosm to God's macrocosm," and "providing a home for the perceptible." But this talk seems to me to fail to meet the difficulty. I would further urge that no discussion of this question can be complete without consideration of the passage about creation at the end of the third dialogue. This passage is only mentioned by Professor Luce in his Introduction (p. 10), where it is described as "more or less new," but not indicating a change of doctrine. There is no discussion of

it. But the passage is crucial. Hylas objects to Berkeley's account of unperceived existence as existence in the mind of God, on the grounds that all things exist from all eternity in the mind of God, so that the existence on which they enter at their creation, their temporal created existence, must be of another kind. Philonous replies:

> "May we not understand it (sc. creation) to have been entirely in respect to finite spirits; so that things, with regard to us, may properly be said to begin their existence, or be created, when God decreed that they should become perceptible to intelligent creatures, in that order and manner which he then established, and we now call the laws of nature? You may call this a *relative*, or *hypothetical* existence if you please."

This position is clear and intelligible; but it involves the rejection of the view, suggested by Berkeley in several passages, that the existence of material things, in the ordinary sense of "existence," when not perceived by finite minds, consists in their being perceived by God. The gardener means by the existence of the tree, when not perceived, temporal created existence in the space-time order. This existence, Berkeley now admits, must be the "hypothetical" existence of perceptibility. The Eternal Spirit is still required as the cause of the form and pattern of the perceptible, but not as its "home." It is the "decree" of God, not his ideas or perceptions, which gives existence to sensible things.

My other quarrels can be more briefly stated. In Chapter 8 Professor Luce defends Berkeley's difficult argument in Section XXIII of the "Principles." He says that Berkeley here argues that "imagined existence is perceived existence imagined." This may be what Berkeley ought to have said, or part of what he said. But I still think that Berkeley was mistaken when he said that it is a manifest repugnancy to conceive books or trees existing unconceived or unthought of. Berkeley here surely means that it is the fact that I conceive them which makes it self-contradictory to say I conceive them existing unconceived. This is a way of arguing often adopted by idealists of the kind from whom Professor Luce distinguishes Berkeley. It is a fallacious way of arguing. It is self-contradictory to say that I conceive something which is conceived by nobody, but not to say that I conceive of something as having existed before I conceived it, or that I conceive of something which would have existed even if I had not conceived it. Let even Berkeley be allowed to talk nonsense sometimes; this piece of nonsense does not affect his main position; do not let us try to torture it into sense.

Professor Luce several times says that the question whether matter exists is a question of fact. "This is no question about a mere concept or category, or a point of view, or the use of terms; fundamentally it is a question of fact . . . ." (p. 157). He also says "Matter . . . is rather a way of thinking than a thing thought" and "Nothing in *rerum natura* corresponds to the term." Now to say that it is a question of fact whether matter exists, suggests that "matter exists" is a significant proposition, and that the question is whether it is true or false. And Professor Luce suggests that it is false because neither inspection of the perceptual situation nor the researches of physicists reveal any such thing as matter. But surely Berkeley's contention is that the term "matter," in the sense of a corporeal substratum, and the term "exist," as used in connexion with it, have no meaning at all. And Professor Luce does seem to recognize this, at times very clearly, in Chapter 5 on "The Meaning of Existence." If this is so, on Berkeley's view, the question of fact is whether we can attach any meaning to the word "matter," not whether, having attached a meaning, we can discover something such as we mean.

Chapter 10 is concerned with Berkeley's account of the distinction between the real and the imaginary. Professor Luce rightly supports Berkeley in saying that when in an actual case we wish to draw the distinction we make no use of the abstract conception of matter; we turn to certain empirical tests based on the familiar order of experiences. But surely it must be admitted that Berkeley's account of what these tests are is very far from being an adequate one. It is not merely "lawlessness," faintness and inconstancy that mark the delusion. An hallucination might perfectly well be very regular in its occurrence, very vivid, and very steady, and yet remain an hallucination. It is rather the kind of laws which it obeys which mark it as a delusion. Appearances connected with others in our own experience and that of other persons by the laws of motion and the laws of perspective are appearances of real material objects; appearances connected with others in our own experience and that of other persons by these laws and by the laws of refraction and reflection of light are illusory appearances, but still appearances of real things; they are, for instance, images, mirages, reflections; appearances connected by physiological and psychological laws only with other appearances in our own experience, and with those experiences of other persons which constitute states of our own bodies, are hallucinations.

Berkeley's contention that "outness" or distance is not seen but inferred might also with advantage be recognized as a dubious one, rather than left to be accepted on the authority of the prophet.

It is only on the subject of our knowledge of other minds that Professor Luce admits an inadequacy in Berkeley's treatment. "Whatever the reason, his treatment is summary and sketchy; he does not take the issue squarely on its merits . . . ." Few would deny that this puzzling problem becomes even more puzzling if we accept the *esse est percipi* principle, and should have been given more extended treatment by Berkeley.

Professor Luce ends his book with an interesting Appendix on "Immaterialism to-day," where he suggests that the views of modern physicists show that the notion of matter is on its deathbed, if not already dead. He well says, "A laboratory experiment, however far-reaching its conclusions, starts from objects of sense, ends with objects of sense, and establishes facts about objects of sense, working throughout by reasoning based on perceptions of sense . . . " and asks how, if that be so, the concepts of subatomic physics can be concepts of *matter* in any sense of the term not applicable to the things we touch and see. The supposed unobservable entities inferred from what we can observe have lost their credibility as they have become shorn of the time-honoured abstract qualities of solidity, impenetrability, indestructibility, and simple location in three-dimensional space and one-dimensional time. They must either be regarded as unknowable agents or sources of energy, of whose intrinsic nature we can know so little that scientists are well-advised to say they "are what they do," and metaphysicians may without absurdity suppose them to be thoughts or volitions of an infinite Spirit; or else they must be regarded as mere symbolic entities, logical constructions out of their observed effects, no more concrete and no more "material" than the centre of buoyancy of a ship. It would be interesting to know which view the fact of the atomic bomb would seem to Professor Luce to support; he mentions it in a footnote as, in some way which he only describes as painful, bearing out the truth of his argument.

To end on a note of commendation, of which this book deserves more than I have space to give, Chapter 2 gives a short but admirable account of Berkeley's views on abstract ideas, and the important truth they contain, though we should have welcomed a more extended examination of the

nature and necessity of "concrete thinking." Chapter 5, on the meaning of existence, shows an understanding of and sympathy with the grounds of the *esse est percipi* principle, which if the reader once share, he will never again be troubled by such realist arguments as appear for instance in Professor Moore's *Refutation of Idealism*. Finally in Chapters 4 and 19, Berkeley's doctrine of our notion of spirit is expounded in a manner that shows once for all the falsity of the accusation that Berkeley allows an "abstract idea" or "a priori concept" to enter his philosophy by the back-door, under the alias of a "notion."

D. G. C. Macnabb.

Reason and Conduct in Hume's Treatise. By Rachael M. Kydd. (Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. ix + 196. Price 12s. 6d. net.)

This book is devoted chiefly to an elucidation and examination of Hume's treatment of the intrinsically important and long-discussed question of the part played by reason in the determination of conduct, although the author declares her main interest is in the general problem and not in Hume. The latter's problem and discussion are first shown to be rooted in the controversies and speculations of his own and preceding times. Post-Reformation philosophers, feeling the need of a basis for morality other than Revelation, had by Hume's time all come to believe that in one way or another morality depended on reason; yet the interpretation of this position was a matter of much dispute and there was urgent need for a critical examination of the opposing approaches to the problem. This is where Hume steps in. The author then proceeds to a detailed consideration of the relevant sections of the *Treatise*, which she analyses with care, patience, and sympathy in order to bring out the practical influence of various kinds of judgments—demonstrative theoretical and practical judgments and empirical theoretical and practical judgments. At several points, it is worth noting, she has to admit the force and merit of Hume's arguments. At the same time, I think that a reader may find difficulty with some of the author's argumentation, such as the *Black Bess* argument; for, as the issue is one concerning the influence of demonstration on conduct, it seems that something else is involved in desiring the specific horse *Black Bess*.

The author is to be commended for dealing with a side of Hume which has been somewhat neglected in comparison with his epistemological theory and for giving the philosophical public such a study as this. It has its limitations due to the express isolation of a specific problem, the consequence being that Hume's doctrine of the Passions and his theory of Belief are not elucidated even though they are closely linked to his moral theory; indeed he himself declares that belief is "almost absolutely requisite to the exciting our passions" and defends his doctrine of belief by the plea that it "may give us a notion after what manner our reasonings from causation are able to operate on the will and passions." It is a pity that the nature of the problem of reason and conduct is not more fully elucidated at an early stage in the book because (1) most of the discussion is of purely factual matters, (2) it is not until the last chapter that reference is made to a more specific problem concerning the relation of reason to *moral* conduct, (3) there remains doubt about the nature of practical judgments and moral judgments respectively. The author's examples, such as going on a Mount Everest expedition, in the discussion of the influence of various kinds of judgments, are concerned with matters of fact and do not raise a moral issue, although they do raise a practical one. Hume himself does emphasize the distinction in several passages, one im-

portant one being quoted by the author; and the point of his criticism of Clarke and others is that fitness and unfitness is a factual affair. According to Hume "morals have an influence on the actions and affections . . . morals excite passions and produce or prevent actions" (Everyman Ed., pp. 166, 167). The term thus cannot signify actions themselves or be another name for conduct; the important thing lies in the signification of such words as laudable or blamable, merit or demerit, virtue or vice, or in general by ethical terms; and for Hume such terms are quite distinct from such terms as reasonable or unreasonable, true or false. This distinction removes some of the sting from his much criticised, and to many odious, statement that reason is and ought only to be the slave of the passions: that view is expressed in a passage where he is dealing with a question of fact and is followed by the Third Book with its exposition of his moral theory, the consequence being that the passions in their operation, hence actions, and hence reason itself come under the restrictive influence of *morals*. The general trend of his argument is to deny that "reason" is in any way inherently ethical in character or that there is any necessary connection between what is rational and what is moral. There is a good deal of evidence from experience that "reason" may be employed for vicious action as well as for virtuous and that thus it is ethically neutral. Those who object to Hume, whether Ethical Idealists, or the author herself who, following Spinoza, suggests the idea of "a passion to act rationally for its own sake," are, I suspect, reading into "reason" an ethical, in addition to a factual, character. It needs to be emphasized that what seems to be in dispute is the nature of "reason." This is the challenge thrown out by Hume. If his attempt to define the role of reason by analysing the factual side of conduct does not of itself permit of the conclusion that the role is a factual one and a factual one *only*, and if this conclusion rests much more on an assumption that if reason enters into "morals" it must be capable of causing desire and hence action, his line of argument may be unsatisfactory, but his challenge, only tentatively taken up by the author in her last chapter, remains.

B. M. LAING.

Books also received:

University Pamphlets by various authors: *The Mind of the Modern University, The Christian in the Modern University, The Place of a Faculty of Theology in the University of To-day, Halls of Residence in Modern Universities, "Vocational" and "Humane" Education in the University, Work and Vocation, Religion in the University, Calling all Freshmen, Universities under Fire, Christianity's Need for a Free University, The Foundations of a Free University, Objectivity and Impartiality*. London: Student Christian Movement Press. 1946. 1s. each.

T. D. WELDON (Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford). *States and Morals*. A Study in Political Conflicts. London: John Murray. 1946. Pp. xii. + 302. 9s. net.

WARNER ALLEN. *The Timeless Moment*. London: Faber & Faber Ltd. 1946. Pp. 245. 10s. 6d. net.

JOHN LAIRD. *Philosophical Incursions into English Literature*. Cambridge University Press. 1946. Pp. 223. 12s. 6d. net.

BERTRAND RUSSELL. *History of Western Philosophy and its Connection with, Political and Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1946. Pp. 916. Price 21s. net.

THOMAS HOBBES. *Leviathan: or the Matter, Forme and Power of a Commonwealth, Ecclesiasticall and Civil*. Edited with an Introduction by Michael Oakeshott. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1946. Pp. lxvi + 468. 8s. 6d. net.

JOHN LOCKE. *The Second Treatise of Civil Government and a Letter concerning Toleration.* Edited with an Introduction by J. W. Gough. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1946. Pp. xxxix & 165. 8s. 6d. net.

J. S. MILL. *On Liberty* and *Considerations on Representative Government.* Edited with an Introduction by R. B. McCallum. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1946. Pp. lv. + 324. 8s. 6d. net.

ERNEST A. PAYNE. *Henry Wheeler Robinson.* A Memoir. London: Nisbet & Co. Ltd. 1946. Pp. 212. 12s. 6d. net.

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RUDOLF KAYSER. *Spinoza: the Life of a Spiritual Hero.* With a Preface by Albert Einstein. Translated by Amy Allen and Maxim Newmark. New York: Philosophical Library. 1946. Pp. xix. + 326. 3 dollars 75 cents.

MICHAEL POLANYI. *Science, Faith and Society* (Riddell Memorial Lectures, Eighteenth Series, University of Durham). London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. 80. 2s. 6d. net.

V. N. DEVARA, B.A. *Theory and Practice of Philosophy.* Kalahastri. Chittoor Dist.: V.N. Devara. 1945. Pp. 68. Price 2 Rupees.

MERLE W. BOYER. *Language and Religion in the Light of the Analysis of Signs.* Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago. 1946. Pp. 20. No price quoted.

ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE. *A Study in History* (Abridgement of Volumes I-VI by D. C. Somervell). Oxford University Press (Issued under the auspices of the Royal Institute of International Affairs). 1946. Pp. xiii + 617. 25s. net.

W. D. LAMONT. *The Principles of Moral Judgement.* Oxford: at the Clarendon Press. 1946. Pp. xxi. + 225. 15s. net.

C. LAMBEK. *Four Essays: Time and Reality, Objectivity, Logical Coherence, Antagonisms in the Individual.* Copenhagen: Einar Munksgaard, International Publisher. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. 108. 7s. 6d. net.

R. C. K. ENSOR. *Some Reflections on Herbert Spencer's Doctrine that Progress is Differentiation.* The Herbert Spencer Lecture delivered before the University of Oxford May 28, 1946. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. 28. 1s. 6d. net.

W. F. ZUURDEEG. *A Research for the Consequences of the Vienna Circle Philosophy for Ethics.* Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon N.V. Pp. 244. No price stated.

MARTIN FOSS. *The Idea of Perfection in the Western World.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, O.U.P. 1946. Pp. 102. English price 8s. 6d. net.

IMMANUEL VELIKOVSKY. *Cosmos without Gravitation.* New York and Jerusalem: Scripta Academica Hierosolymitana. 1946. Pp. 24. No price quoted.

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MUHAMMAD RAFI-UD-DIN. *Ideology of the Future.* Published by the Author (Prince of Wales College, Jammu). 1946. Pp. v. + 561. No price quoted.

HENRY N. WIEMAN. *The Source of Human Good.* Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press. 1946. Pp. vii. + 312. English price, 20s. net. (Cambridge University Press).

CHARLES BERG. *Deep Analysis. The Clinical Study of an Individual Case.* London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1946. Pp. 261. 12s. 6d. net.

KH. ABDUL HAMID. *Ibn Maskawaih.* A Study of his *Al-Fauz al-Asghar.* Published by Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, Lahore. 1946. Pp. 130. Rs. 2·8.

SOREN KIERKEGAARD. *Works of Love.* Translated by David F. Swenson and Lillian Maruin Swenson. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. xiv. + 317. 18s. net.

SIR EDMUND WHITTAKER, F.R.S. *Space and Spirit* (Theories of the Universe and the Arguments for the Existence of God). London and Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons. Ltd. Pp. vii. + 149. 6s. net.

REV. LEONARD HODGSON. *Biblical Theology and the Sovereignty of God.* Cambridge University Press. 1947. Pp. 28. 1s. 6d. net.

REV. E. L. ALLEN, FRANCIS E. POLLARD, G. A. SUTHERLAND. *The Case for Pacifism and Conscientious Objection.* London: The Central Board for Conscientious Objectors. 1946. Pp. 72. 2s. 9d.

J. G. MCKENZIE. *Nervous Disorders and Character.* London: George Allen & Unwin. 1946. Pp. ix. + 94. 5s. net.

A. R. UBBELOHDE. *Time and Thermo-Dynamics.* Oxford University Press. 1947. Pp. vii. + 110. 6s. net.

A. H. SMITH. *Kantian Studies.* Oxford University Press. 1947. Pp. vii.+196. 15s. net.

ARTHUR PAP. *The A Priori of Physical Theory.* Morningside Heights, New York: King's Crown Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. x. + 102. English price 13s. 6d. net.

HERBERT W. SCHNEIDER. *A History of American Philosophy.* New York: Columbia University Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. xiv. + 646. English price 25s. 6d. net.

JOSEPH L. BLAU (Editor). *American Philosophic Addresses, 1700–1900.* New York: Columbia University Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. xii. + 762. English price 38s. net.

WALTER FALES. *Wisdom and Responsibility.* An Essay on the Motivation of Thought and Action. Princeton, N.J.; Princeton University Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1946. Pp. vii. + 166. English price 14s. net.

BRICE PARAIN. *L'embarras du choix.* Paris: Librairie Gallimard. 1946. Pp. 200. 180 fr.

F. H. CLEOBURY, Ph.D. *God, Man and the Absolute.* A Study of the bearing of philosophy on Christian Theism. London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd. Pp. 150. 15s. net.

INSTITUTE NOTES

A course of lectures on "Contemporary World-Outlooks" was given in the Michaelmas Term, 1946. It is proposed to publish these lectures in a book entitled *Philosophies of To-day*, which will contain a chapter by Bertrand Russell under the heading "My Own Philosophy." When the book is ready, a notice to this effect will be inserted in the Journal.

If members have back numbers of the Journal for which they have no further use, perhaps they will kindly write to the Institute giving details. Arrangements might then be made for them to donate such copies towards restocking libraries on the Continent.

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ARTHUR STANLEY EDDINGTON MEMORIAL LECTURESHIP

LAST year an appeal was launched to provide for the founding of an Arthur Stanley Eddington Memorial Lectureship to commemorate Eddington's life and work, by providing for lectures on some aspect of contemporary scientific thought considered in its bearing on the philosophy of religion, or on ethics, and to be delivered periodically in Cambridge, or elsewhere, and to be published. The Foundation Trust Deed has now been completed, and the following four Trustees have been appointed:—Professor Sydney Chapman, F.R.S., representing the Royal Society; Professor C. D. Broad, Litt.D., F.B.A., representing Trinity College, Cambridge; Dr. Kathleen Lonsdale, F.R.S., and Dr. W. H. Thorpe, representing the Society of Friends. Mr. Howard Diamond, A.C.A., 45 St. Barnabas Road, Cambridge, is Honorary Treasurer and Secretary to the Trustees.

The Fund is still open, and approximately £1,000 is now needed for its completion. It is hoped that the first lecture on the Foundation will take place towards the end of the present year.

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